“You’ve Become All Korean”

Reproduction of Koreanness and the “Multicultural” Children of South Korea

Eeva Helena Holopainen

University of Helsinki

Faculty of Social Sciences

Social and Cultural Anthropology

Master’s thesis

2020 November

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Tiedekunta/Osasto – Fakultet/Sektion – Faculty	Laitos – Institution – Department	
Faculty of Social Sciences		
Tekijä – Författare – Author		
Eeva Helena Holopainen		
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title		
"You've Become All Korean": Reproduction of Koreanness and the "Multicultural" Children of South Korea		
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject		
Social and Cultural Anthropology		
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level	Aika – Datum – Month and year	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages
Master's thesis	November 2020	82

Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract

This thesis examines the notions of ethnicity, nation, and belonging in the context of South Korea, in order to investigate whether the scope of these notions will allow the reproduction of new South Koreans from multicultural subjects through education. South Koreans have traditionally considered themselves a strictly homogenous group: in order to stake a claim on Koreanness, one must meet the requirements of being Korean both in body as well as in practice. During the last two decades, the South Korean state has switched its national narrative into one of a multicultural nation, discarding the ethnonationalist definition of Koreanness. This thesis aims to answer the question of what kind of notion of Koreanness is present in the education of "multicultural" children. Does the educational process aim to transform these Othered children into Koreans? Is there even a potential for such transformation in the context of the South Korean society? How does the process work in practice?

The data of this thesis was collected through participant observation during a three-month long fieldwork period at a South Korean afterschool educational institution catering to children with immigrant backgrounds. The data consists of descriptions of the centre's educational programme and structure, and a field diary depicting the everyday interactions between the adult Korean staff and the Othered children, as well as among the children.

The requirements of being Korean in body and in practice were both salient in the educational setting of the centre. Being Korean in practice presupposed a suitable command of learnable skills such as the Korean language and the proper Korean way of studying. The children each participated in the learning process from more or less peripheral localities, defined by the limitations of their relative competence. Their positionality in regard to Koreanness was dynamic and under constant change. Nevertheless, the explicit and implicit everyday practices of the adult staff upheld the requirement of having Korean blood or being Korean in body, which restricted the children's positioning in the boundary-making process of defining Koreanness.

Although the current national narrative of the South Korean state emphasises the notion of a multicultural nation, the ethnographic data of this study suggests that the traditional folk definitions of Koreanness have not changed. The requirements of being Korean both in body as well as in practice seem to still be dominant in everyday life. "Multicultural" children are unable to fulfil the former requirement but are nevertheless situated as subjects of the state and civil society's multiculturalist educational project in regard to the latter. Through a social learning process, they may be able to approximate full membership in the Korean society, but reaching it seems ever elusive.

Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords

ethnic identity, nationhood, multiculturalism, social reproduction, multicultural education, immigrant children, South Korea

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Tiedekunta/Osasto – Fakultet/Sektion – Faculty	Laitos – Institution – Department	
Valtiotieteellinen tiedekunta		
Tekijä – Författare – Author		
Eeva Helena Holopainen		
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title		
"Sinusta on tullut korealainen": korealaisuuden reproduktio ja Etelä-Korean "monikulttuuriset" lapset		
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject		
Sosiaali- ja kulttuuriantropologia		
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level	Aika – Datum – Month and year	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages
Pro gradu -tutkielma	Marraskuu 2020	82

Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract

Tämä tutkielma käsittelee etnisyyden, kansakunnan ja kuulumisen käsitteitä Etelä-Koreassa sekä niiden suhdetta korealaisuuden reproduktioon maahanmuuttajataustaisten lasten opetuksessa. Eteläkorealaiset ovat perinteisesti pitäneet itseään erittäin sisäisesti yhdenmukaisena ryhmänä: jotta henkilö tunnustettaisiin yleisesti korealaiseksi, hänen tulee täyttää vaatimukset sekä ruumiillisesta että käytännön korealaisuudesta. Kahden viimeisen vuosikymmenen aikana Etelä-Korean valtion virallinen narratiivi on hylännyt etnonationalistisen korealaisuuden määritelmän ja tuonut tilalle monikulttuurisen kansakunnan ajatuksen. Tämän tutkielman pyrkimyksenä on selvittää, millainen korealaisuuden määritelmä vallitsee maahanmuuttajataustaisten lasten opetusympäristössä. Onko kasvatusprosessin tavoite muuntaa lapset korealaisiksi? Onko korealaiseksi muuttuminen ylipäänsä mahdollista ympäröivän yhteiskunnan silmissä? Miten prosessi käytännössä tapahtuu?

Tutkielman aineisto kerättiin kolmen kuukauden mittaisen kenttätyöjakson aikana osallistuvan havainnoinnin keinoin maahanmuuttajataustaisille lapsille suunnatussa iltapäiväkeskuksessa. Aineisto koostuu iltapäiväkeskuksen opetusohjelman ja rakenteen kuvauksesta sekä kenttäpäiväkirjasta, joka selostaa keskuksessa työskennelleiden korealaisten aikuisten ja maahanmuuttajataustaisten lasten välistä vuorovaikutusta sekä lasten keskinäistä kanssakäymistä.

Ruumiillinen ja käytännön korealaisuus olivat molemmat läsnä lasten opetusympäristössä. Käytännön korealaisuus näyttäytyi opeteltavissa olevina taitoina, kuten korean kielen ja oikeanlaisen opiskelutavan hallitsemisena. Lapset osallistuivat oppimisprosessiin kukin oman kompetenssinsa rajoittamina, toiset keskeisemmästä sijainnista, toiset reunemmalta. Kulttuuristen tietotaitojen kehittyminen teki heidän sijainnistaan suhteessa korealaisuuteen dynaamisen ja alati muutoksen alaisen. Tästä huolimatta, aikuisten niin eksplisiittisten kuin implisiittisten vuorovaikutuskäytäntöjen kautta ylläpitämä ruumiillisen korealaisuuden eli kuvitellun verisukulaisuuden vaatimus rajoitti liikettä.

Vaikka Etelä-Korean valtion virallinen narratiivi korostaa nykyään monikulttuurista kansakuntaa, tämän tutkielman etnografinen aineisto osoittaa, että korealaisuuden perimmäinen vaatimus ei vaikuta muuttuneen. Vaatimus sekä ruumiillisesta että käytännön korealaisuudesta dominoi edelleen jokapäiväisessä elämässä. Maahanmuuttajataustaiset lapset asettuvat vaatimusten risteyskohtaan: he eivät pysty täyttämään ruumiillisen korealaisuuden vaatimusta, mutta sijoittuvat siitä huolimatta valtion ja kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoiden monikulttuurisen koulutusprojektin kohteeksi. Taitojen lisääntyessä sosiaalisten oppimisprosessien kautta lapset liikkuvat yhteiskunnan reuna-alueilta kohti täyttä korealaisen yhteiskunnan jäsenyyttä, mutta sen lopullinen saavuttaminen näyttäytyy käytännössä mahdottomana.

Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords

etninen identiteetti, kansalaisuus, monikulttuurisuus, sosiaalinen reproduktio, maahanmuuttajalasten kasvatus, Etelä-Korea

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

During the last two decades, few matters have defined the political atmosphere of the Global North as strongly as questions of immigration and nationalism. As increasing transnational mobility sees more people settling in countries not of their origin, right-wing leadership opposing immigration has seen widespread support in many areas such as Japan, Europe, and the United States. In many countries, the integration of newcomers as well as long-time residents outside of the dominant ethnic group is a question of heated debate. Multicultural policies vary, with various approaches to the project of integrating and policing the *Other*.

In Western Europe, along with the rise of populist nationalism, social scientists have noted a "broader political retreat --- from ideals of multiculturalism" (Valluvan 2016: 204). Many a European leader has followed suit of the former British Prime Minister David Cameron, who in his speech on February 5th, 2011 effectively and famously declared that "multiculturalism is dead". Notably, Cameron stated that "under the doctrine of state multiculturalism we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. We have failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to *belong*" (The Guardian 2011, emphasis added). The continent that once flew the flag of multiculturalism the highest has not only seen a political countermovement, but also a significant decrease in the enthusiasm of mainstream politicians. With a shift of the mainstream to increasingly anti-multicultural and even anti-immigrant discourse, ethnonationalist ideology and narratives are being discussed more openly in public, spilling over from extreme right-wing political movements. The emerging prevalence of ethnonationalism not only focuses on exclusive *ethnic group membership*, but also asks who should be allowed to be a member of the society, further bringing into question the matters of *nationality* and *belonging*.

While state multiculturalism, immigration issues, and a polarised atmosphere have characterised the last two decades in the West, these issues are not solely a Western

struggle. With the rapid industrialisation and economic development of many East Asian countries during the latter half of the 20th century, intensified participation in the global economy resulted in increased transnational mobility as it had in the West. As diversity becomes a visible part of everyday reality, questions surrounding immigration, multicultural policy, and national belonging are naturally becoming more conspicuous as well. Both immigrants themselves as well as right-wing anti-immigration protesters and political movements have grown louder. While ethnonationalist sentiment, ethnic essentialism, and seemingly clear-cut boundaries between "us" and "them" may be similar in both the West and the East, state responses to the diversifying reality vary greatly. Varying national identity building processes and multicultural projects naturally create different realities for immigrants and other Othered residents in different parts of the world. This thesis aims to examine one such case: the case of Republic of Korea (hereinafter South Korea).

In regard to transnational mobility, South Korea is a country that only rather recently changed from a country of origin into a receiving country. Both the state and the citizens are faced with their respective challenges as previously indisputable matters such as membership in the Korean nation face pressure both from newcomers as well as long-time residents who have been previously excluded from public discourse. The state has found itself in need of functional immigration and multicultural policies as well as a new basis to build a national identity on. The people on the other hand are forced to re-think their ethnic and social identity–what it means to be Korean.

Where the Western side of the world has seen a change into a more nationalist or even ethnonationalist narrative, South Korea seems to have been travelling in the opposite direction, at least on the surface level of policy. For the best part of the 20th century, ethnicity, culture, nationality, and citizenship were inseparable in the minds of Koreans. The state used the idea of consanguinity as the basis for building national identity: the national curriculum taught that South Korea was a country with a singular bloodline, language, and culture (Watson 2012: 233–234). However, due to increased migration, the development of multiculturalism policies, and the change of

institutional terminology, the notion of Koreanness has been going through a process of transformation during the last 15 years. While descriptive terms such as “mixed-blood” are still widely used in everyday language and private communication, the official take on non-ethnically Korean South Korean residents has seen a switch from an ethnicity or race-based narrative to a culture-based narrative. Rather than stressing a homogenous nation with common ancestry, South Korea now proudly declares itself a *multicultural society* (Kang 2015: 10–15, Watson 2012: 233). The narrative of culture may be a genuine ideology, or a flimsy cover-up for the traditional notion of ethnicity-based belonging. Regardless, the terminology currently in usage seems to suggest that while previously, Koreanness was spoken of as something that is only attainable at birth, it is now spoken of as something that can be taught and learnt, at least to a certain extent. In my thesis, I aim to examine what Koreanness means in everyday practice today: whether it is an exclusive ethnicity, a multicultural and multiethnic nationality accessible to immigrants, both, or something in between.

As one of the defining narratives of our time, ethnicity and nationalism are both widely researched topics in the contemporary academia. Anthropology, as it is, has played a great role in our understanding of issues related to these matters. As Thomas Eriksen (2001: 24) lists in his paper on *Ethnic Identity, National Identity, and Intergroup Conflict*, anthropological literature spans a wide scope of phenomena from “North American multiculturalism and indigenous rights movements, post-Soviet ethnonationalism in Central and Eastern Europe, urban minority dilemmas and Islamic revivalism in Western Europe, *indigenista* movements in Latin America, and processes of political fission and fusion in contemporary Africa”. Although research on ethnic diversity and multiculturalism is a new field in South Korea, it is already rather extensive. Several ethnographic studies on ethnic identity, multiculturalism, and Otherness have been published in the recent years, most notably the several studies included as chapters in the book *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea* (2014) as well as Minjeong Kim’s monograph *Elusive Belonging: Marriage Immigrants and “Multiculturalism” in Rural South Korea* (2018). This monograph adheres to the most common focus of research

on diversity in South Korea: marriage immigrants, one of the most defining categories of South Korean state multiculturalism. More often than not, in regard to family and children, the research only brings out those multicultural families that comprise of the quintessential union between the South Korean husband and the immigrant wife.

I decided to focus my own research interest on children due to the central role education practices play in the reproduction of Koreanness. The upbringing of children can shed valuable insight on the local notions of group membership, group boundaries and belonging. Currently existing research on children is chiefly domestic to Korea and has dealt with children of multicultural families on a larger scale, including immigrant children in it. It has mostly concentrated on their education and the societal discrimination they face. Children are seen as objects of education and policies that are in operation in order to guarantee them a well-adjusted and happy life as members of the Korean society. Global citizenship and multiculturalism education directed at the general student population have been studied on the policy level, but as Watson (2020: 196) remarks, "there is --- very little understanding about the social implications of these shifts within education for children's experiences in schools, particularly inter-ethnic relations and what these changes mean for their sense of belonging as members of Korean society". To gain a more comprehensive understanding of how state multiculturalist discourses shape the everyday practices of educators and children and affect the boundary negotiation processes of nation on the level of children's interactions amongst themselves alongside with authority figures, more ethnographic research on this topic in needed.

In the light of this fact, I wanted to observe how children who are not considered Korean are regarded and brought up in an educational setting. I decided to analyse the reproduction of Koreanness in an educational setting through the concept of *legitimate peripheral participation*, an anthropological understanding of how situational learning happens in the social world. Along the progress of my research, my research questions settled on the following:

- What kind of notion of Koreanness is present in the education of "multicultural" children?
- Is it expected of these Othered children to "become Korean"? Is there a possibility for them to do so? How does the process work?

In regard to romanisation of hangul, the Korean scripture, I use the *Revised Romanisation of Korean* style in this thesis. I provide terms as well as lines spoken in my field also in hangul whenever deemed necessary.

In this introductory chapter, I have explained my own personal interest in the study of ethnic and national groups, identities, and belonging, as well as the wider societal context of this research. I also briefly reviewed what angle anthropological research has taken on ethnicity and national belonging, and what kind of research exists on the topic in the context of South Korea. Lastly, I introduced my research questions.

In the second chapter, I go through the methodological approach I took in regard to my fieldwork, describe the field, and my position in it. I pay particular attention to ethics, as ethical concerns were in danger of becoming a major stumbling block in the process of this research.

In the third chapter, I first define the terminology most central to my topic–*ethnicity* and *nation*–and proceed to illuminate the meanings these terms have in the South Korean context through examining the particular historical and cultural circumstances of the society. Secondly, I review the recent history and current situation of state policy on immigration and multiculturalism, which have in part moulded the lived reality and experiences of immigrants and other Othered residents of South Korea. Thirdly, I take a look at the lifes of Othered residents in the current South Korean society and discuss the meaning of *belonging.*

In the fourth chapter, I aim to answer my research questions through analysing the formal structure of the educational program at my field, as well as the ethnographic

data I gathered as I observed the daily interactions between the Korean adult teaching staff and the Othered children.

In the fifth chapter, I discuss what my findings are and how they fit in the current understanding of ethnic and national group membership and belonging in South Korea. I then propose styles of future research to further deepen this understanding.

2 Methodology

Before the start of my fieldwork, I read material with a wide range of topics concerning the South Korean society, history, as well as immigration and multiculturalism policy. Although I knew my research would focus on ethnicity and Othered children, and had thought up some preliminary research questions, I wanted to arrive on the field with a rather open mind and was fully expecting my research focus to change, as is often wont to happen during ethnographic fieldwork (Okely 2020: 48–49). As this was my first time observing these particular themes in this particular locality, I considered it more beneficial to observe what issues would emerge as salient naturally during the fieldwork. I also reasoned my research questions would be dependent on the particular field I would manage to gain access to.

In this chapter, I first introduce the general setting of my field, a regional children's centre catering to "multicultural children", and its operation. I then discuss my own position, explaining the restrictions that limited my freedom to choose my position in the field as a researcher and the methodology I used. Lastly, I discuss how ethical problems affected my research process.

2.1 The Field Setting

I conducted three months of fieldwork in a large metropolitan area in South Korea during the spring 2017. My field was an afterschool program, a part of the national social welfare system called *regional children's centres* (*jiyeokadongsenteo*, 지역아동센터). These centres are meant for children of disadvantaged background, mainly children whose family earns less than the median income. Children with other perceived disadvantages such as children of single parent households may also attend. While their activity is regulated by child welfare law and funded by the government, the centres themselves are often operated by private institutions such as churches or NGOs (Regional Children's Centre Seoul Support Group, n.d.). Most children's centres are not exclusively meant to be used by a specific group such as children of

multicultural families. However, after some searching on the internet, I was fortunate enough to find, contact, and finally gain access to one operated specifically for the benefit of children of multicultural families. The children's centres exist nationwide, both in urban and rural settings. The centre I entered was situated in an urban setting, run by an evangelical church that additionally operated primary and secondary schools for immigrant children. In total 34 children attended the centre's afterschool program, with one new child entering and subsequently quitting the centre during the length of my fieldwork.

Already at the very beginning of the process of finding a field, I decided to search for a more informal afterschool education setting for practical reasons: gaining access and research permits within my tight schedule to a more official setting such as a public school seemed rather impossible. With this practical limitation, the target group of my research naturally settled on children with multiple intersectional vulnerabilities: as Othered residents in the surrounding society and as members of the lower socioeconomic classes. As mentioned, I searched for a field before arriving in South Korea via the internet, contacting several afterschool programs that advertised to be catered to children of multicultural families. I approached the centre directors with an email introducing myself and my thesis research project, as well as simultaneously offering to help, within my capabilities, with the children's English language education as well as the programs' other educational activities. Although I predicted it quite difficult to gain access to a field with such a vulnerable group of informants present without previous connections or introductions, I was surprised to receive answers from all but one of the afterschool programs I contacted. Unfortunately, some answers were negative and other programs turned out to be otherwise unsuited for my research topic despite their unexpectedly warm welcome. However, I was fortunate enough to receive one answer that welcomed me to visit their afterschool program and discuss my possible presence there. After arriving in South Korea and visiting my field for the first time, I attribute my fast gain of access and rapport to two different reasons: first, to my stereotypically blonde, Western appearance and the widespread association of privilege and fluent English language skills with whiteness in South Korea

(Jenks 2017, Ruecker and Ives 2015); and secondly, to the fact that upon our first meeting, my command of the Korean language was fluent enough to assure the teachers my presence at the centre would do more good than harm.

Whereas most of the research I had read previously focused on children with one Korean and one non-Korean parent, most of the children at the centre had either immigrated to South Korea themselves or had been born within the country to migrant parents and were not ethnically Korean. There were some children of "classic" multicultural families with a Korean father and a foreign mother, as well as one fully ethnically Korean child. Most of the immigrated children had a Chinese background: many of the younger ones had only just moved to Korea and did not yet speak Korean except for a few very limited, concrete everyday phrases. As some of the children had elderly, Korean-speaking relatives picking them up from the centre in the evening, I believe it to be possible that some of them might have actually been part of the *joseonjok*, an ethnic Korean minority largely living in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Northeastern China. However, notably this was never brought up in the conversation and the children were always referred to as Chinese. In any case, most of the children had the Chinese language as a common communication tool amongst themselves even if they were not able to communicate with the adults on an abstract level. A few of the children had other backgrounds, such as Mongolian, Japanese, Vietnamese, or Filipino. Most of the children had a fully East Asian heritage and did not look visibly very different from their Korean peers. The centre had only one pair of siblings who were not of East or Southeast Asian descent and stood visibly out in the fairly homogenous-looking group of children as well as the general population, due to their black skin colour.

There were several adults at the centre, who all assumed very different roles. Four adults besides me stayed in the centre every day, full-time. These were the director of the centre, a social worker, a young man performing an alternative form of compulsory military service, and a cook taking care of the meals provided for the children and the staff at the centre.

The director of the centre was a middle-aged woman. In regard to direct contact with the children, she rarely participated in hands-on studying, but rather took charge during several learning programs such as cooking class. Besides, she always gave religious sermon before mealtimes, talked to the children during them, and addressed any general issues or concerns there might be. She was also the one to assert final authority on misbehaving children.

The social worker was sometimes involved in hands-on studying with the children if needed and there were no other teachers present. However, she also mostly worked in the office and took charge of several learning programs, most notably the multicultural education class. Both the director and the social worker played with the children occasionally as their schedule permitted, especially after dinner. The lady who mostly took care of cooking the meals was also occasionally involved in the children's education, as she held a "pretty handwriting" course for the children on Saturdays. The young man helped in the kitchen, ran errands, helped the children with their studying in general, as well as played with them constantly.

There were also several outside teachers who came to the centre regularly. Out of them, a general teacher helped the children with their homework and studies. She came to the centre three days a week and spent the whole day there from when the children arrived until dinner, eating with the children and staff. There was also a specific Korean language teacher, who spoke Chinese and helped the younger children with their language studies two times a week. In addition, there was a book-reading teacher, who held a book-reading class once a week, music teachers who taught the older primary school children to play the violin once a week, and a science teacher, who also taught the older primary school children once a week.

The children's ages varied from primary school first graders to last year of lower secondary school (from 6 to 15 years old or from 7 to 16 years old in Korean age), with high school aged children popping in to visit occasionally. An ordinary day at the centre

flowed in the following manner: the first and second graders usually arrived first after their shorter school hours, followed by older primary school students. Many of the younger children attended the immigrant school run by the church and were brought to the centre after school with a school bus. There were also students who attended nearby public schools and walked to the centre by themselves after school hours. After the students arrived, they would first leave their school bags and smartphones in their own lockers, standing next to the wall by the door side. If they had homework, they took it with them and entered the study rooms. With the youngest children who spoke no Korean, an adult would usually divide the group into two, so the children might stay calmer and study rather than run around, play, or fight. Whether the children had homework or not, they were always required to complete a certain number of pages in study books that were kept at the centre and used for extra study. Again, the younger children with severely lacking language skills did not have their own study books yet, and rather worked on Korean writing system *hangul* study sheets made by their general studies teacher or the social worker, as well as communally used math books.

All the children present had a snack at 3 pm, after which they could play, or continue with their study if they were not yet finished. On several weekdays, there was a specific class after snack time, which either all or some of the children attended. Secondary school students usually arrived in time for dinner at 6 pm. After dinner, younger students left the centre as their guardians picked them up, while the older students often stayed behind to study, usually English.

2.2 Positionality

I was present on my field Monday-Friday from 1 pm to 6-7pm for three consecutive months. I usually spent most of my time during the day with the youngest children. I helped them and watched them study after they arrived and often played with them or observed them play after snack time, while older primary school students were still studying. I attended several learning programs that all the children attended together, such as book-reading class and multicultural education, but I rarely participated in the

classes that only older children attended such as violin and science. I also did not participate in the younger children's small group Korean language teaching class. In general, I would mostly be involved in the activity at any point of time that involved the majority of the children.

My position on the field was dual. While I was a researcher, in order to provide a justifiable reason for my presence at the field, I had also promised to participate in the everyday operation of the centre in the role of a volunteer. This meant specifically that I participated and helped with the everyday programme of the centre and also often tutored the older, lower secondary school aged children, helping them with their English studies. However, due to both the limited time the older students spent at the centre as a result of their more demanding schooling, and the stricter role I assumed as a teacher in their presence, I decided to base my thesis mainly on my observation of the younger, primary school aged students at the centre.

Due to the nature of participant observation, I found this arrangement to be not only fair as I was able to help my informants just as they helped me with my research, but also beneficial to me as not only the children but also the operators and teachers of the centre welcomed me very warmly into their community, somewhat to my surprise. I was able to attend almost all the activities the centre arranged and gain both the children and the adults' trust quite quickly.

However, this dual role was not ideal from a purely research-focused perspective as it restricted my freedom in positioning myself as a researcher in the field. Participant observation among children often aims for the "least adult role", through means such as playing with the children and "abdicating from adult authority" in order to gain access to children's social world (Warming 2011: 42–43). Walton (2020: 198), who researched children of similar age as some of the children on my field in a South Korean elementary school setting, describes taking this approach as she dressed in casual clothes similar to the children, used doors usually used by only students and not teachers, and asked the children to call her by her first name. The "least adult role" is

seen as desirable by researchers because “it recognizes the power relations between adults and children which in some situations – due to children’s mistrust or conflicting adult interests – can prevent the researcher from gaining access to some areas of children’s social worlds” (Warming 2011: 43). In an article discussing the best practices of ethnographic fieldwork methods to use with young children, Hanne Warming (ibid.) describes her own experiences: although children disagreed on the role they seemed to want the researcher to take, sometimes asking her to assume authority and reprimand other children, she views her refusal as success as the children would sometimes tell her “secrets”, which they never would to teachers. However, this strategy has also been criticised for “being based on an illusion about the possibility of dissolving the power relations involved in the research process”. Some ethnographers instead prefer the role of “the detached observer” or “other adult”.

In my case, aiming for the “least adult role” was impossible, as I also participated in the centre’s life as a volunteer. However, my goal was to observe not only the perspectives of the children, but also the larger framework in which they were being educated as potential future members of the Korean nation. Thus, trying to disrupt the “natural” flow of the cultural workings of Korean hierarchy by assuming a role perceived somehow strange to an adult of my age and position would have seemed counterproductive in the case of my fieldwork. I felt that within the limitations of my positionality, the best I could do would be to assume a role that answered most closely all of the staff and attendees’ expectations, created during the first weeks of my fieldwork through my interaction with everyone at the centre, adults and children alike. This way, I felt I disrupted the centre’s regular operation the least. As such, I often assumed a lesser authority role in regard to the children, when the teachers asked for my help; but I also spent more time playing with the children than any other adult at the centre as they all had their own responsibilities workwise. With the children, I aimed at answering their wishes for me in the same ways as with the teachers, playing those games the children asked me to, never reprimanding them for things such as “rowdiness” or misbehaviour during playtime. I believe that my presence rather approximated the role of “other adult”, as the children, especially the

older elementary students, did not quite regard me as another teacher. This was obvious from occasions of conflict, when the children almost never turned to me for authority, instead calling for the social worker or the director.

As my fieldwork was concentrated on young children, many of whom spoke virtually no Korean or any other language that I or the other adults at the centre spoke, my ethnographic method remained pointedly simple and I only conducted participant observation. Besides the children's age being so young it would have been very difficult to interview them, I had no common language with many of them. In the very beginning of my fieldwork, I was contemplating on conducting a few interviews with the adults working at the centre at a later timing during my fieldwork, but during the three months I gave up on the idea. With the short time I had on my field, I saw it more sensible to fully concentrate on the observation of everyday practices.

Ethnographic studies among young children are often conducted with the objective of recognising the children's perspective. In order to reach this goal, many scholars utilise the methods such as videotaping and photographing, as well as involving the children themselves in the actions of videotaping and photographing (Warming 2011: 40). Walton (2020: 198-199) also used photographing as well as interviews based on photographs taken by the children as part of her ethnographic methodology. This permitted interesting observations, such as noticing the fact that multiethnic children among her informants took less photos of "friends" in comparison to monoethnic children. I recognise that utilising other methods besides participant observation could have been beneficial to my data as well. Fortunately, the centre director allowed me access to a photo-based social media channel of the centre that acted as a gateway of communication between the centre, parents, as well as older children. The director added me to this channel on the day I was finished with my fieldwork and leaving my field, with the explicit remark that she thought it might help me with my research. Although I was unable to give the children photographing or videotaping tasks that may have helped me to better reach their perspectives, due to both financial and time restrictions, these teacher-taken photos of the centre's everyday life helped me

greatly when reviewing my field notes. They not only reminded me of details otherwise rendered vague, but also explicitly showed the embodied localities of the children and the adults at the space of the centre.

Besides ethics, which I will touch upon in the next section, my greatest challenges on the field were quite practical. As the days at the centre were often rather hectic if not chaotic, and my own involvement in most activities was quite intensive, I was usually unable to write field notes during the day. Consequently, most of my field diary was written out in the evening after I had left my field. There were also many days I was just too tired to write long notes after the day, which naturally has an effect on my data. Thus, for more in-detail field notes and a more thorough and accurate analysis, I recognise a longer period of participant observation would be needed, preferably without the intensive dual role of a full-time volunteer and researcher.

2.3 Ethics

One of my main concerns regarding my thesis are the ethics. This is due to several facts: first of all, my main informants are children, moreover children of a particularly vulnerable group. Secondly, I faced some suspicion regarding my wish to fully disclose my status as a researcher. Before accessing my field, I was told I would be allowed to come to the field and conduct my research as long as I did not act as if I was conducting it. I believe this request was due to negative experiences the centre had had with previous researchers. The director in a discussion once recounted researchers coming to the centre and having the children fill out several questionnaires, overall disrupting the centre's daily life. As the nature of ethnographic research is very different from this, I felt confident promising this would not be the case for my part, but still argued that for ethical reasons I could not conceal that I was not at the centre only as a volunteer. After this discussion, the director allowed me to tell the children that I was there in order to write about them for my university. This was told to all the children communally a few times, and the children were asked for their permission to be included in my research, which they all gave. However, many of the children were

very young, and some of them did not speak Korean to an extent that they could fully understand what they were agreeing to. Thus, some of the children's participation in my research was automatically in the hands of and decided by the director of the centre, who held the gatekeeping power and had approved of my presence at the field. I did, however, aim to be sensitive to the children's perceptions and feelings and strived to not impose myself in sensitive situations or on children who seemed unwilling. With the older children, my writing about them for my university was mentioned also in everyday discussion sometimes, and thus the older children were very aware of the reason why I came to the centre. All the adults, such as the permanent staff of the centre as well as the teachers whose classes I attended with the children, were aware that I was at the centre to conduct research for my thesis and discussed my studies and my research with me several times.

The guardians of the children were not separately informed about my position formally. This was also due to the opinions of the director. Some of the parents of the children were more aware of me as they sometimes volunteered at the centre to help out, for example when the centre moved their location to a building next-door during my fieldwork. The director assured me that informing the parents formally was not necessary as this was neither the first nor the last time that research was conducted at the centre, due to the nature of the centre as an afterschool educational facility for immigrant children. While I found this fact very problematic, I trusted the director and the other staffs' judgement whether research was a normal part of running the children's centre, and whether informing the parents' explicitly of my particular research was necessary.

Despite the challenges I faced regarding the ethical side of my research, mostly due to the reluctant attitude of the main gatekeeper in my field, I do believe that it is fairly safe to say that there is no threat of my research harming any of my informants. This is due to the undisruptive nature of my research method as well as the fact that I was uninterested in finding out any details about the children's families or their life outside of the centre. I was not privy to any personal information of the children handled at

the centre by the staff. Besides this, the most important point that led me to compromise my own views on proper ethical conduct and accommodating the director's wishes is the fact that my field and my informants are very easy to anonymise. There are hundreds of similar children's centres throughout the country, and hundreds of them are situated in metropolitan areas. As I feel that disclosing my exact location within South Korea is unnecessary and it is enough to say that my field was in an urban setting, I feel confident that it will be fairly impossible for outsiders to recognise the exact location of my field or the identities of my informants from this text.

3 Koreanness and Otherness

At least since the beginning of the 20th century, Koreans have considered themselves extremely homogenous as a nation. The idea of an ethnically and culturally homogenous nation has been strongly internalised by the society to the point it was previously taught to children in public schools in the form of nationality based on "one-blood, one-language, and one-culture" (Moon 2010: 3, 5; UN 2006: 10). This ideology of "pure blood" (*sunsu hyeoltong*, 순수혈통) even received attention internationally, when the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in the United Nations declared in 2006 it had resulted in discrimination against ethnic minorities and so called "mixed-blooded" (*honhyeol*, 혼혈) citizens. Although an educational reform has since been executed and official materials do not use such terminology anymore, the ideas of common ancestry and blood relations tying the nation together have not disappeared. Words such as mixed-blooded are still in widespread use in everyday language and can be often seen in mass media, also commonly used by multiethnic persons themselves.

However, many academics argue that this strong perception of one ethnically, culturally, and linguistically homogenous Korean nation is a rather modern concept. As concepts of state, citizenship, and peoplehood have changed over history, so has the idea of what it means to be Korean; the idea of what Koreanness is. In this chapter, I first review how academia sees the development of Korean ethnic and national identity over history. Secondly, I examine what multiculturalism means in the South Korean context and how the official narrative of nation has changed in the last two decades. Lastly, I review some case studies on how Otherness manifests in the current South Korean society.

3.1 Ethnicity and Nation in South Korea

Ethnicity is commonly defined in anthropology as a sort of group identity based on shared cultural traits as well as a belief in common ancestry and shared history.

Although ethnicity relates to culture, it does not mean that ethnicity and culture have a direct, singular relationship. As Eriksen (2001: 43) points out, ethnic identity is based on "socially sanctioned notions of cultural differences"; there are differentiated ethnic groups living in similar areas with little cultural variation, as well as ethnic groups with significant inner cultural variation, such as between different socio-economic classes. The belief in common origin and descent can also be dynamic and object of change and reconstruction (Verkuyten 2018: 47). However, the belief in shared descent is significant as it is what differentiates ethnic groups from other kinds of socio-cultural groups, such as youth cultures or subcultures. As in the case of South Koreans with their focus on the narrative of a common bloodline, ethnicity can be described through "a kinship metaphor"; ethnicity is "family writ large" (Verkuyten 2018: 58). The belief in shared history also brings forth an emphasis on the continuity of the group.

One of the most influential concepts regarding ethnicity was introduced by Fredrik Barth in 1969, as he theorised that instead of external lists of cultural traits, ethnicities are better determined by their boundaries. Ethnicity, in other words, does not exist *within* groups but rather *between* them, in social interaction as a process of differentiation between *us* and *them* (Eriksen 2001: 46; Verkuyten 2018: 52). As Munasighe (2018: 5–6) summarises Barth's conclusions, "categories of ascription or identification that organize interaction --- are those defined by and relevant to the people". Barth also noted that ethnic boundaries are continuously crossed by a flow of people, signifying situational flexibility of ethnicity.

As many other larger groups, ethnic groups as well as nations are often referred to as imagined communities after Benedict Anderson, who studied the origins of nationalism (Eriksen 2001: 44–45). Eriksen describes two different schools of thought on the origin of nation and its relation to ethnic groups. Anthony Smith represents the primordial school, arguing on the necessity of a pre-existing ethnic group preceding the development of nationalism while simultaneously acknowledging the modernity of the notion. On the other hand, Ernest Gellner emphasised the modernity of the creation of nation with a succeeding invention of a past, seeing nations as purely

constructed (ibid.; Shin 2006: 4). While there are different arguments on the relation between ethnic groups and nations, the concept of nation is always linked to state and citizenship. Gellner sees nations as ethnic groups controlling or wishing to control a state, while Anderson provides examples of multiethnic countries as imagined communities, such as Indonesia and the Philippines. Gi-wook Shin (2006: 4) notes that the relationship between ethnicity and nation is especially complicated in the South Korean case due to "substantial overlap between the levels of race, ethnicity, and nation".

Many academics have claimed (e.g. Watson 2012: 234; Shin 2006: 4) that Koreans have not traditionally differentiated between ethnicity, culture, and nationality. In order to claim Korean identity, one needs to attest their Koreanness in at least three different dimensions: "having Korean blood, knowing and using the Korean language, and understanding Korean culture and customs" (Kim 2020: 77). Nadia Y. Kim (2014B: 215) reformulates these three requirements into two categories: being *Korean in body* and being *Korean in practice*. She remarks that "since in the Korean imagination being Korean in body rarely has been extricated from being Korean in practice-such as speaking the language, knowing the history, and enacting Confucian norms like filial piety–Koreanness is called into question if both cannot be taken for granted." This folk notion of undisputed equivalency between language, culture, and ethnicity ties to state through the origin story of the Korean nation.

South Korea as well as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (hereinafter North Korea) both trace their origins to Dangun, a mythical descendant of gods and a ruler who established the first Korean kingdom in the northern part of the Korean peninsula (Lie 2014: 3–4; Shin 2006: 4–5). While Koreans have regarded themselves "descendants" of Dangun, John Lie (2014: 4) notes that the myth is rather "a story of a new monarch, not the beginning of people". Starting with this first mythical king, the current popular historiographic narrative in South Korea emphasises that Korea has a long history of indigenously ruled kingdoms and dynasties all the way up until the 20th century, focusing on the historical continuity of their singular nation.

Nowadays most academics studying multiculturalism and multiethnicity in South Korea agree that the notion of a culturally homogenous ethnic group and nation, united by a common bloodline, is not a primordialist fact but rather a modern product of certain historical and political developments, leaning towards a more constructionist understanding on the relationship between ethnicity and nation. Shin (2006:5–6) notes that constructionists have argued that even though Korea was ruled sovereignly before the modern period, the society lacked a sense of communality and was hierarchical, divided into three classes: the elite, commoners, and slaves. Besides, despite their sovereign rule, Korean kingdoms were part of the Chinese civilized world as a part of the Chinese tributary state system. As Shin explains, the Korean elite class, *yangban* (양반), "would have found the idea of nationalism not only strange but also uncivilised, and they may have considered themselves to be members of a larger cosmopolitan civilisation centred around China". This interpretation reflects the traditional Chinese and Confucian culture-centred view on group boundaries. Confucianism, the state philosophy of both Chinese and Korean historical dynasties, did not differentiate people on the basis of external racial features or language, but rather based on cultural practices on the axis of *civilized–barbarian* (Ma 2007: 202–204). Regardless of phenotype or native language, peoples who accepted Chinese cultural norms and participated in Confucian rites, as the Korean elite class did, were considered part of the civilized, i.e. the Chinese world. John Lie (2014: 5) remarks that even though it is impossible to prove the existence or non-existence of a widespread ethnic or national identity in historical times only on the basis of class division and lack of integration between socio-economic groups, it is clear that nationalist ideology as well as the notions of nation and ethnicity came to Korea in modern times from the West. Shin notes that some academics warn against a completely Westernised view of the Korean nation formation process, arguing that with "the stable territorial boundaries" and "the endurance of the Korean bureaucratic state", both lasting over a thousand years, it may have been possible for a "homogenous collectivity with a sense of shared identity " to form much earlier compared to the development of nation-states in Europe (Duncan 1998: 200–201 in Shin 2006: 6).

Regardless, it is clear that the historical developments of the 20th century have left a strong mark on the South Korean ethnic as well as national identity. After the Japanese colonial rule of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945, both South and North Korea emerged with nationalist, albeit otherwise contrary state ideologies. Shin (2006: 41) explains that current South Korean nationalist historiography follows the common assumption that colonialism has been the main driving force behind the rise of nationalism in many parts of the world. Indeed, Korean nationalism is often described as having risen in "direct opposition to Japanese colonialism" (ibid.). Shin, however, notes that responses to colonialism in the Korean peninsula were diverse and included identities based on various other categories besides nation. Lie (2014: 5–6) notes that besides anti-colonialist movements, which happened largely outside of the peninsula, the colonialist period also saw many members of the Korean elite and academia subscribing to the Japanese ideology that Korean and Japanese people share a common ancestry as well as to the Japanese state project of making Koreans assume Japanese peoplehood. Nevertheless, as Lie and Shin both argue, this state project is exactly what caused the Koreans to begin defining their in-group in contrast to an out-group, in an effort to differentiate between Koreans and Japanese. According to Shin (2006: 22), "the articulation of Korean nation through --- 'ethnicization' or 'racialization' was no doubt a reaction to Japanese colonial racism that sought to subsume the Korean identity under the rubric of the transnational notion of empire". Lie (2014: 6) also notes that the Japanese colonial rule precipitated the break-down of the traditional class-based Korean society, as subjecthood to the Japanese state brought the Korean elite class to the same level as commoners, enforcing a new kind of collectivity.

After the liberation of the peninsula from Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War, South Korea was ruled under right-wing authoritarian governments for more than 40 years. This period marks the development of what Lie terms the "monoethnic and monocultural South Korea". During this period, South Korea as well as North Korea both exerted effort in trying to prove their legitimacy as the rightful leader of the

divided Korean nation with a commitment to unification (Lie 2014: 8; Shin 2006: 112). While both countries regarded each other as "the radical Other and the ultimate enemy" (Lie 2014: 8), their relationship was and is still tied to a strong belief in ethnic unity and a following need for unification of the divided nation. Choo (2014: 123) describes how "the exclusion of North Korea was central to the imagine community of South Korea" as the positioning of North Korea as the opposite in their self-definition was central to the South Korean nation-building process.

Authoritarian rule invested in political, economic, and cultural nationalism, as well as hostile relationships with the neighbouring countries of Japan and North Korea created a fertile ground for a culture of uniformity and xenophobia in the South. During the 1960s and 1970s, president Park Chung-hee's policy caused the mass departure of ethnic Chinese people from South Korea to the United States and other countries. Others not fitting in the uniform standard of Koreanness, such as the multiethnic children of American soldiers and South Korean women, were widely discriminated against in both private and public life and strictly marginalised. The promotion of nationalism and de-valuation of all things non-Korean by the South Korean government manifested in different forms, e.g. the purification of the Korean language by abandoning the use of Chinese characters in Korean writing and establishing a standardised language form. However, the cultural uniformity of the era far surpassed standardised language, reaching over to consumption habits and outer appearance. Conformity roused immediate suspicion against anyone who deviated from the norm: as Lie (2014: 11) puts it, "a man with a moustache might be regarded as possibly Japanese or a Japanese sympathizer".

The democratisation of South Korea, starting in the 1980s as a student activist movement, may have resisted the authoritarian rule and the official anti-communist nationalism, but did not forsake nationalism altogether. The *minjung* movement (민중운동) or the movement of the people stressed national liberation from foreign as well as domestic oppression, embracing the notion of a homogenous ethnic and cultural group. Besides being anti-authoritarianist and anti-Americanist, the nationalist

student movement put emphasis on folk culture and art as well as on the purity of Korean language and sought the erasure of foreign culture (Lie 2014: 16–17; Shin 2006: 167, 171). Only after the 1990s did this ultimate equivalency of nation, ethnicity, culture, and language in the minds of Koreans start being challenged unprecedentedly. In the 2000s, greatly increasing transnational movement lead to the South Korean government's initial embrace of globalisation and eventual embrace of *damunhwa* (다문화) or *multiculturalism*, bringing on great changes to the South Korean society.

3.2 From Ethnonational to Multicultural Narrative

History of mass immigration into South Korea is rather recent. For most of the 20th century, South Korea was a country of origin rather than a destination country for migrants. At the beginning of the century, caught in the midst of geopolitical conflicts of regional superpowers, Korea lost its independence and many emigrated to neighbouring countries. During the first half of the century under Japanese colonial rule, there was also forced migration within the territory of imperial Japan. After the Korean War, in addition to the 160,000 Korean children who were relocated to the United States, Europe, and Australia through adoption (Kim 2014A: 165), South Koreans emigrated from the war-torn country in rapidly increasing numbers in hopes of finding a better standard of living elsewhere. Labourers moved to Germany and the Middle East to work as nurses, miners, and construction workers, and brides of American soldiers acted as first links of chain migration as they brought their relatives over to the United States (Oh et al. 2012: 32; Yuh 2005: 278).

During this time, a majority of the South Koreans who did not fit the state's one-blood narrative were children of American soldiers and Korean women, who were often of low socio-economic class, many working as entertainers, waitresses, or prostitutes around the US army bases. As the South Korean state tied the right to citizenship to paternal lineage until 1997, upwards socio-economic mobility was extremely difficult for children born to American fathers and Korean mothers. The traditional Confucian

focus on patrilineage further caused their status to be completely disregarded within the society (Kim 2014B: 218–220; Lim 2014: 34).

South Korea rose as a destination country for immigrants only in the late 1980s, when the fast economic and industrial development begun to require more workers than were locally available. A few main events had particular impact on the number of immigrants arriving in South Korea. Firstly, after South Korea and the People's Republic of China established formal diplomatic relations in 1992, a still continuing flow of Chinese Korean or *joseonjok* immigrants from the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Northeastern China begun. Secondly, the South Korean government established the Industrial Trainee System in 1993 in an effort to mobilise low-cost foreign workers from developing Asian countries to work in the economically important heavy industries. This was the first systematic introduction of foreign workers to South Korea, focusing on tight control of immigration flows (Oh et al. 2012: 32–33). South Korean immigration policy was focused on bringing in low-cost, non-professional labour force for limited periods of sojourn. Labourers were not allowed to bring their family members with them and could renew their visas only by the request of their employers, and even so only for a limited number of times. These workers were largely unintegrated in the general native population, often living in accommodations offered by their employers at their worksite and excluded from most social services (Lee 2010: 48, 50-52). Furthermore, the system only targeted workers from certain countries, leaving e.g. African labourers undocumented by default (Kim 2014B: 213). The system, however, did not exactly work in the government's favour, instead resulting in a large number of undocumented immigrants as many overstayed their visas. By early the 2000s, hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants resided in South Korea (Lee 2003: 133), forcing the government to revise the system. This resulted in the establishment of the Employment Permit System in 2004, still in order and the main source of long-time foreign sojourners in South Korea.

After activism campaigns by Chinese Koreans who complained the government was discriminating against them in comparison to other co-ethnic Korean groups such as

Korean Americans, a special Work Visit Visa was introduced in 2007, applicable only to "overseas Koreans", i.e. ethnic Koreans with Chinese or former Soviet Union nationalities. Lee Byungha (2010: 41-42) describes this as part of the process of "re-ethnization" of Korean immigration, as the government offers special treatment to ethnic Koreans, especially those of Korean American and *joseonjok* descent. The visa gives the ethnic Koreans freer choice of employment and longer sojourn periods compared to other low-skilled labour immigrants, as well as the right to invite their family members to the country. Ethnic Koreans of foreign nationalities constitute a major part of of low-skilled workers in South Korea and are seen as "less likely to disrupt social order" (ibid. 58) as they are regarded to have necessary language skills and familiar culture and customs. Lee explains that as ethnic Koreans, overseas Koreans are an object of immigration policy, as in state controlling their entry and exit, and less of an object of social integration policy.

During the 1990s, a second group of immigrants appeared that had a more direct impact on the development of social integration policies, i.e. multiculturalism policies, in South Korea: marriage immigrants. The trend was supported by some local authorities, which started projects in order to get rural bachelors married (Lee 2010: 59). After 2002, the amount of marriage immigrants entering the country increased 28 % every year (Statistics Korea 2020A). Unlike in the previous decades when international marriages were often marriages between Korean women and American soldiers (Lee et al. 2006: 165–166), most of these marriages are between Korean men and foreign women, often from China or Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia, and Thailand. There is also a number of Japanese women marrying Korean men. In 2019, around 36 % of marriage immigrants residing in the country were Chinese nationals (Statistics Korea 2020A). The body of men searching for foreign brides, on the other hand, is mostly comprised of rural never-married men and divorced men of low socio-economic status in urban areas. Especially in rural areas, the demand for marriage immigrants is caused by distorted sex ratios, as young women move to cities to seek higher education and better employment options, whereas the oldest sons of families are responsible for taking over the family farm (Lee

et al. 2006: 166–170). After 2011, when new restrictions to issuance of marriage visas were introduced, the increase in the number of marriage immigrants has slowed down to an average of less than 2 % per year (Statistics Korea 2020A).

The increase of marriage immigrants was the catalyst to the switch of the official narrative from a singular nation with a common bloodline to a multicultural nation, as the new situation created a new category of family in South Korea that had never been publicly considered before: *damunhwa gajeong* (다문화 가정) or the *multicultural family*. Kim (2018: 46) elaborates that "according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, multicultural families consist of marriage immigrants related to Korean citizens by birth and foreign-born naturalized immigrants related to Korean citizens by birth. Thus, multicultural families necessarily involve familial ties to Koreans, usually children born in Korea". Most often, the multicultural family consists of the South Korean man, commonly of a lower socio-economic background, the immigrant wife, commonly a citizen of a developing country, and their multiethnic children. The creation of South Korean multiculturalism or *damunhwa* policy and social integration programs can be said to be a direct result of the phenomenon. Firstly, in 2006 a "Grand Plan" to reduce discrimination against female marriage immigrants and multiethnic residents was introduced, and Marriage Immigrant Support Centres, later to be renamed Multicultural Family Support Centres, were established all over the country. According to Lee (2010: 49), the centres mostly provide "Korean language education, programs for vocation training, and counselling for family related issues". According to the website of Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (2020), Multicultural Family Support Centres currently offer education on Korean language and subjects such as health, nutrition of children, as well as mother-child relations.

In 2008, following the Basic Law Pertaining to Foreigners in Korea, the Korean government introduced the Multicultural Families Support Act. This act was also designed to help international marriage migrants and support multicultural families in the form of supporting newly arrived immigrant wives, providing them with social welfare and helping multiethnic children at school. In order to integrate these

multiethnic children, various acts were performed in schools to change the school environment, schoolbooks, and curriculum (Lee 2010: 60). These include abandoning the usage of terms such as “one-blood” and “mixed-blood” for more politically correct versions. Thus, children previously called “mixed-blooded” are now usually referred to as *children of multicultural families* in official contexts.

The number of long-term foreign residents–defined as foreign nationals staying in the country for more than 90 days by the standards of the South Korean government–surpassed 2 million for the first time ever in 2018, in a country with a population of almost 52 million. In 2019, the percentage of foreign residents of the total population was 4,3 % (KOSIS 2020). While the number has risen rapidly, many scholars have noted that the loud discourse around South Korean multiculturalism seems to be in imbalance with the relatively small number of foreign residents. However, many argue that rather than the number of foreigners, it is the quick pace of the population change that has caused the ruckus. Following the rapid increase in migration, the shift from a narrative emphasising a singular bloodline and cultural unity to a declaration of being a multicultural society was sudden and extremely fast. John Lie (2014: 1), the editor of the book *Multiethnic Korea?* points out that “until the 1990s, to speak of South Korea and multiethnicity or multiculturalism in one breath would have struck virtually everyone as bizarre”. Ji-hyun Ahn (2012: 97) observes that “since 2005, ‘multicultural’-based terms such as ‘multicultural society’, ‘multicultural family’ and ‘multicultural education’ have grown explosively in Korean society”. Mi Ok Kang (2015: 3) describes the “rise of multicultural discourses” in 2008 “an ‘unexpected’ event”. Hui-Jung Kim (2009, 43) illuminates the sudden change in discourse effectively with contrasting numbers: while the term “multiculturalism” was only mentioned in mainstream press 235 times during the decade of 1990-1999, it appeared in at least 99,222 articles during only three years in 2005-2008.

As the South Korean immigration policy is ethnicised and integration policies chiefly target women who are seen as reproducing the Korean bloodline, it is no wonder that this quick and surprising change often raises questions on the nature and goals of

South Korean multiculturalism policy. Nadia Y. Kim (2014B: 212) points out that "the state and many NGOs and pro-migrant activists --- do not define and enact multiculturalism as pluralistic equality of all groups", and Timothy C. Lim (2014: 32) goes as far as to call the "Korean state's embrace of multiculturalism – partly, if not mostly, 'fictitious'". Most academics agree that the main reasons behind South Korea's sudden declaration of the country as a multicultural society were pressures caused by globalisation and rapid economic change, as well a rapidly aging population and one of the lowest birth rates in the world. Many also suggest that following international human rights and globalisation-oriented trends were underlying reasons, as South Korea attempted to "show moral progress to the advanced Western states" (Kim 2014B: 212; also Kim 2014C: 66, 73). Despite the great contrast with the preceding ethnonationalist narrative, the new multiculturalist policies were not a shift away from nationalism: "political change was possible due to the strong existing norms—that is, widely spread and socially shared ideas about progressing toward an advanced society, an extension of state-strengthening nationalism of earlier eras. The new discourse on democratic citizenship, workers' rights, and multiculturalism did not replace, but rather complemented the existing framework of state-strengthening nationalism", as Seo-Hyun Park (2018: 393) phrases it.

The target of the state's multiculturalist project is defined by most academics as mainly marriage immigrants (Kim 2009: 112; Kim 2014B: 212; Lim 2014: 32, 46-47; Watson 2012: 238). Marriage immigrants and their children, who from the state's point of view answer the problem of low birth rate and marriage gap, are provided with governmental support in different forms. Low-skilled migrant labourers, who answer the problems of aging population and shortage of labour force in low-skilled labour unattractive to native Koreans, are still mostly regarded as an economic tool, short-period sojourners, and in no need of integrational support, even as their labour rights are becoming more respected. However, when it comes to children and multicultural education, the playing field is more mixed.

In the first-ever official document regarding multicultural education in 2006, the Education Support Plan for Students from Multicultural Families by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, "the multicultural family is defined as 'a family consisting of persons with different ethnic, cultural backgrounds'" (Kang 2015: 91), putting focus on the children born of marriages between South Korean men and foreign women. However, the document also discussed the educational rights of children of immigrant workers and undocumented immigrants: while not included in the definition of a multicultural family, immigrant children with no South Korean parent were also included under the umbrella term of *multicultural education*. Thus, when observing the education of multicultural children in South Korea, the target group can include children with extremely different backgrounds. A "multicultural child" can mean anything from a child that was born in a foreign country and then immigrated to South Korea; a child that has been born in South Korean to immigrant parents; to a child that has been born in South Korea to one ethnically Korean parent and one immigrant parent. This point was very visible in my field as well: the centre targeted "children of multicultural families", but a great majority of the children attending my centre were children of immigrant families. Some of the children had only just moved to the country and spoke absolutely no Korean; some were born in the country and naturally had absolutely no difficulties dealing with the language or any social or cultural norms. While the main target group of South Korean state's multiculturalism policy are marriage immigrants, the educational field encompasses children from a more diverse variety of backgrounds, including them in the multiculturalist project in the context of school and other educational institutes. However, in reality, many children of undocumented immigrants have attended unofficial schools, unable to access the public schooling system and excluded from the mainstream society.

Since the South Korean multiculturalism policy targets mostly those immigrants moving to the country for the purpose of marrying a Korean national, thus being introduced to the society as a part of the Korean family, it is most often described as assimilationist by academics. Nora Hui-jung Kim (2014C: 68) points out that while

multiculturalist policies in different states vary, they usually share the common ideology that “cultural differences should be celebrated and preserved”. However, this “ethnocultural justice” seems not be the goal of South Korean multiculturalism.

Lee (2010: 59–61) argues that the goal of Korea integration policies is assimilating foreign women and their multiethnic children to the quintessential Korean patriarchal family rather than creating a “true” multicultural family. Kim (2014C: 68–69) brings this idea further, arguing that treating immigrant wives only as members of the Korean family established the multicultural family as the unit of multiculturalism, erasing a cultural community formed by immigrants. Lee sees two shifts in the immigration policies as multiculturalism was introduced: a shift from controlling *the Other* to assimilating *the Other* to *us*, and a shift from the women to the level of the family. She argues that the immigrant wives are being treated as a solution to Korea’s low birth rate and aging population and are thus seen as wives and mothers of current and future Koreans. The education provided for them is focused on teaching the women Korean manners and customs and the Korean culture. The women are not encouraged to teach their children about their own language or culture. Moreover, when childless immigrant wives divorce, they are expected to return to their countries, whereas divorcees with children are allowed to stay in the country. Kim’s (ibid. 69–70) observations on the state’s multiculturalist programs as well as on the language used in columns in the mainstream press confirm these ideas as widespread. While pushing the public to accept the new, diverse reality of the South Korean society, the writers urge marriage immigrants to accept educational programs and find their places in the family as “Korean daughters-in-law”, who “know how prepare to kimchi and soy sauce”. Kim argues that in this type of discourse, “multicultural” is simply a cover-up for the term “multiethnic”, as multiethnic brings forth the negative connotations of impurity of blood and is thus a much less unattractive term.

Han Geon-Soo further criticises the assimilationist model, explaining that the need for multiculturalism policies has been framed by the Other’s failure to adapt and integrate to the South Korean society (2007: 46). Lim (2014: 47) illuminates this point by citating

passages from the Grand Plan from 2006: the document attributes this failure to reasons such as “lack of sufficient knowledge of Korean language and culture” as well as “insufficient understanding of Korean society”. The policies then target only the immigrants, rather than surrounding society. Kim (2014C: 72) agrees, arguing that the main goal of multiculturalism policy is to “maintain social stability” rather than “boost ethnocultural justice”. The unadapted Other is seen as having great potential to cause social problems, which then must be countered by cultural assimilation in order to eliminate the threat to stability.

In the face of this perceived threat of social problems, children of multicultural families are often singled out by integration policies: according to the website of Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Multicultural Family Support Centres continue to offer the children of multicultural families special services. Currently, the program includes services such as help with schoolwork as well as education on things such as basic everyday life habits, family life, health and security, cultural awareness, and identity establishment (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family 2020). By looking through the curriculum offered to these children in these government operated centres, a conclusion can be quickly reached: children of multicultural families are officially regarded as a group that potentially needs more support in their everyday life compared to other children. Ian Watson (2012: 249) argues in his paper that the policy of providing multiethnic children extra education is an indication of the group being viewed as a possible problem group. Abelmann et al. (2014: 108) note that educators themselves have expressed worry over this issue, describing how a representative from a provincial university of education expressed his concerns that the multicultural education programs might rather scar than help multicultural children, and that they should target all children instead. Watson also points out how this singling-out is only applied to multiethnic children, whereas the children of a foreign Western family would not be viewed as a potential problem. However, at the same time these multicultural families are given relatively more support than other foreign groups due to their perceived connection to the Korean bloodline (Lee 2012: 239). Paradoxically,

the South Korean multiculturalism policies may be encouraging the perceived division between Koreans and Others.

Lastly, in their ethnographic study of elementary school teacher training, Abelmann et al. (2014: 95) suggest that the South Korean multiculturalism project is in fact, rather than a coherent body of policy with clear goals and processes, "a speedy adoption of a project that is not yet clearly defined or delimited". Naming this "makeshift multiculturalism", they note how hurriedness, seemingly random election of key actors, and a quick embrace of the mandate even with no previous expertise characterise the development of the country's multicultural education programme. Even though it may appear as a strictly defined state project, on the level of field multiculturalism appears to be improvised and even coincidental.

Despite the rather cynical view many scholars have towards South Korea's state multiculturalist project, academics have also reminded that despite the strong state-defined and state-led character of South Korean multiculturalism, the concept cannot be reserved for state actors only. In fact, many changes in South Korean immigration policy have been aftereffects of activism by immigrants as well as pro-immigrant groups. Basic labour rights became more respected by the government and integrated into policy after mass desertion of positions by low-skilled labourers as well as more explicit political activism and demonstrations in the 1990s (Lim 2014: 49-55). In a similar fashion, *joseonjok* marriage immigrants, initially preferred by the South Korean government as well as the unmarried men looking for brides for their presupposed Koreanness and smoothness of assimilation, did not always answer the expectations and instead used the policies as openings to pursue their own goals of modern lives, independence, and entrepreneurship (Freeman 2004: 97 in Lim 2014: 52). Despite the state-initiated nature and locating the Other as an object of assimilationist strategies, it is evident that immigrants and non-state actors can and do have a long-term effect on the state of multiculturalism, citizenship rights, and the Others' belonging in South Korea, as well as on the future direction of the diverse reality. Kim (2014C: 76) and Ablemann et al. agree with Lim, stating that South Korean multiculturalism is "more

than a rhetoric" and that having it as a guideline can have real effects on the official nation-building process in the future.

3.3 Otherness and Belonging

Lim notes that before mass migration to South Korea, most South Koreans not only assumed that their society was homogenous, but also believed that "*only* 'Koreans' (i.e. those that shared a common bond based on blood *and* ethnicity) could belong to Korean society" (Lim 2014: 32, emphasis original). The official acknowledgment and promotion of heterogeneity brings forth the concept of *belonging* next to ethnicity and nation. Changing official narrative has brought into question once again not only what Koreanness is, but also who belongs to the Korean society.

Minjeong Kim (2018: 11–12) explains how the notion of citizenship has become more complicated due to migration, as the dichotomy of citizen and non-citizen no longer adequately describes the different realities of people living within a the borders of a country. Citizenship becomes a dynamic process of state, civil society, and migrant actors negotiating the level of inclusivity and incorporation that the migrants have in the society. Citizenship not only refers to the legal status granted by state to a person, but also to the "participatory dimension", as well as the "cognitive and emotional dimensions". This cognitive and emotional dimension is termed *belonging* by Nira Yuval-Davis (ibid. 12). Belonging encompasses "the maintenance, reproduction, and contestation of community boundaries to demarcate Us and the Other". Feeling "at home", "safe" and a "sense of entitlement" are also important aspects of belonging. As belonging relates to citizenship and state, it is closely related to the notion of nation as well. Nakano Glenn describes one of the aspects of belonging as "being identified as part of a people who constitute a nation" (ibid. 12).

As described earlier, there are many different groups of people who face the categorisation as Others in the Korean society, all of whom correspond differently to the requirements of being Korean in practice and in body. Through the following

review of a few selected ethnographic studies, I aim to examine belonging in the context of several different Othered groups: marriage immigrants, labour immigrants, North Koreans, and Korean adoptees. The diversity of these groups provides an illustrative selection of different outcomes of the South Korean multiculturalism project and its effect on the sense of belonging of different Othered groups. The two first groups are non-Korean migrant groups: marriage immigrants are the most emphasised group in terms of the South Korean state multiculturalism project, while labour immigrants constitute arguably the officially least appreciated group, as many of them reside in the country undocumented. The two latter groups are both co-ethnic groups, but with very different symbolic positions within the notion of Koreanness: where North Koreans simultaneously represent the ultimate "evil" Other as well as a nation's imagined future reunification, adoptees represent the nation's regrettable past as well as its hopes for upward mobility in the global order of prestige.

As marriage immigrants are the primary target of the state's assimilationist multiculturalism project, one might assume their sense of belonging in the Korean society would be most supported by surrounding state and civil society actors. In her monograph *Elusive Belonging* on Filipina migrant wives in rural South Korea, Kim examines the emotional processes these marriage immigrants go through as their sense of belonging develops, or when it is disrupted. The process indeed is not straightforward. In her fieldwork, Kim followed the lives of Filipina immigrants at home and as participants to different state and civil society sponsored multiculturalism programmes. Kim identifies many similar problems with South Korean multiculturalism as other academics have. Despite the initial enthusiasm of the Filipinas to start their new lives in South Korea as well as the goodwill of various civic and government programme actors, Kim concludes that Koreans multiculturalism places Koreans at the centre and Filipinas as the object of help and transformation. This is illustrated by how programmes aimed at Filipinas place Korean economic and social interests above their own aspirations and career interests (Kim 2018: 114–117).

The boundary negotiation between Koreans and Filipinas on the Filipinas' position in

the Korean society is aptly summarised by Kim (2018: 167), as she describes the rural Filipina community's discovery of self-identity:

> "The main question asked by Korea's multicultural project was how Filipinas can become a part of Korean society, that is, how Filipinas can be Koreans. Now the question should be whether Koreans can envision and adapt to Korea's future that is increasingly ethnically and racially diverse. Can Koreans see Filipinos and their cultures redefining a new Korea? Filipinas have gradually discovered their collective identity, not as Koreans but as Filipinos in Korea, pushing the waves of transformation lapping at Korea's shore."

In Kim's view, the assimilationist multiculturalism project targeted at marriage migrants is searching for a method of producing "Korean daughters-in-law". The state is enthusiastic about teaching Filipinas how to be Koreans in practice, in the process disregarding the fact that the surrounding society is unable to fully accept them in this role. The failure in being Korean in body plays a great role in this, as demonstrated by Kim's (2018: 139) observations: "in daily speech, Korean community workers and residents often pointed to Filipinas' appearance or skin colour as a barrier to full incorporation". Filipinas themselves have been able to find and adopt an identity as Filipinos in Korea, but this is not recognised by the state programmes that, as noted in the previous section, focus on the family as the unit of multiculturalism, ignoring the community formed by immigrants. This clash in categorisation and boundary-making stands in the way of attaining a sense of belonging.

Hae Yeon Choo's (2014) ethnographic study on Filipino migrant labourers attending migrant evangelical churches examines the role they are given in the Korean society through worship practices. Choo (2014: 131–132) notes that in prayer, migrant workers without ethnic identity were "symbolically incorporated into South Korea as subjects who needed protection, provision, and blessings 'in this land'" besides other disadvantaged groups such as widows, orphans, the sick, the homeless, and the poor.

Although excluded from the state integration policy, the positioning of migrant workers as in need of Koreans' help seems to mirror the positioning of marriage immigrants. Although the status of many labour migrants was undocumented and illegal in the eyes of the state, the church worked to symbolically legitimise their residence through a narrative of an ethic shared with the deeply Confucian Korean value system: sacrifice for the sake of family. This establishes a cultural connection to the Korean nation that enforces the belonging of the migrants in the society.

Choo (2014: 134–136) further describes the shifting boundary between "us and "them", when a Korean Pastor, enraged after a crackdown on undocumented migrants by the immigration office, exclaimed: "How could they do this to us? How dare they come in here and take our people like that?" The Pastor's exclamation situates the migrants and South Korean churches under a collective "we", in opposition to the South Korean governmental authorities. However, as Choo remarks, when the collective "we" of sojourners was expanded from undocumented migrants sojourning in South Korea to all of God's children sojourning on Earth, instead of developing or reformulating the meaning of the Korean nation, the narrative rather ignored it altogether. The church, despite working as an advocate on migrant rights, viewed the migrant labourers as short-term temporary residents and was not invested in the long-term integration of migrants in the Korean society or nation. The church enforced the legitimacy and belonging of migrant labourers, but this was done only with the expectation of a return to their countries of origin. The reality of the migrants, however, contrasts greatly with the church's view. Many have stayed in the country for more than a decade, establishing extensive family connections around the church as long-term settlers, creating their own sense of rootedness and belonging through kinship within the safe space of the church (ibid. 137–138).

A completely different Other in the South Korean society compared to labour immigrants are North Korean migrants. North Koreans as a group are assigned a right to automatic South Korean citizenship and rights by law "in acknowledgement of shared ethnic nationhood" (Choo 2014: 120). In other words, they are officially

categorised as belonging to the same ethnic group and nation as South Koreans, due to the political need to justify the legitimacy of the South Korean state in comparison to North Korea and to identify the basis for the state's official ambition of national reunification. The correspondence of this notion with the belief in Korean homogeneity has been brought into question by academics (Jung 2014: 142–143). Some note that besides obvious cultural differences resulting from historical regional differences as well as decades of life in vastly different political systems, North Koreans could currently even be defined as belonging to a different ethnic group or race due major differences in outward characteristics such as average height (Lie 2014: 2).

Choo's study focuses on North Korean migrants attending South Korean Protestant churches, which are major supporting institutions to North Koreans both throughout their border crossing journeys as well as in their new lives within the South Korean borders. The study highlights the differentiation North Koreans make between themselves and other groups of migrants in relation to the Korean nation. Discussing the South Korean government's decision to change official terminology referring to North Korean migrants from "defector" (*talbukja*, 탈북자) to "new settler" (*saeteomin*, 새터민), a Pastor of a migrant church, North Korean himself, laments: "if anything, 'new settlers' sounds like we are like other migrants, like foreigners, but that's not true" (Choo 2014: 125). This implies the North Koreans' strong identification with the notion of shared ancestry and history with South Koreans–in comparison to other migrants, who in turn are "new" and subsequently "less Korean" compared to North Koreans.

However, North Koreans themselves face discrimination and exclusion from common nationhood by South Koreans, based on the differences in their speech, appearance, and manners, which they were expected to erase before inclusion (Choo 2014: 126; Jung 2014: 153). However, these "errors" that need to be "fixed" are perceived as relatively minor, since a common ethnicity guarantees cultural similarity (Jung 2014: 156). The possibility of "unlearning" these North Korean, i.e. non-South Korean traits is possible through self-improvement. In Choo's (2014: 126–127) case, this included hard

work in order to achieve a better, "more South Korean" work ethic as to erase the perceived laziness associated with communism; as well as adoption of the inherently un-North Korean Christian faith, which manifested in the contradistinction between individualism and socialism. Jin-heon Jung (2014: 153), who studied North Koreans in a weekend training program of an evangelical megachurch, emphasises the importance put on achieving "South Korean" bodily appearance and behaviours, such as speaking in a Seoulite accent and whitening one's skin. Many North Koreans thought the best method for achieving "progress"–in both the upwards mobility of their economic position and the simultaneous process of unlearning North Koreanness and learning South Koreanness–was distancing oneself from other North Koreans and interacting solely with South Koreans (Choo 2014: 128). This contrasts strongly with the case of Filipina marriage immigrants, for whom the formation of a migrant community was a source of self-identity and belonging. Choo (ibid. 130) summarises this individual transformation focused boundary-making in the following paragraph:

> "The [mainstream South Korean] Protestant Church's inclusion of North Korean migrants was a complex move to reclaim a Korean nation that encompassed North Korea by transforming these migrants into proper capitalist subjects with a strong work ethic who were able to assimilate to South Korea as reformed individuals."

Eleana Kim (2014A: 165–166) has studied the experiences of Korean adoptees and their relation to the Korean nation-building process. After the Korean War, ethnonationalism, patriarchy, and poverty resulted in adoption programmes sending away multiethnic children of American soldiers and Korean women. In later periods Koreans were adopted transnationally for economic and social reasons, mainly children of single mothers. Kim describes how Korean adoptees started being welcomed back to the "motherland" as "overseas co-ethnic brethren" in the 1980s, as part of the state's project to "foster sentimental attachments to the nation and restore ethnic identity", cultivate "long-distance nationalism", and "harness economic and human capital of its overseas populations". Since then, many Korean adoptees have

returned to the country, some even as long-term residents, often employed as English teachers (ibid. 169).

Kim describes how a sense of common guilt towards adoptees, who are viewed as victims of the authoritarian and patriarchal state, left unrecognised by the anti-authoritarian *minjung* movement, positions them as objects of charity of South Koreans. Kim (2014A: 173–174) observes that volunteers in NGOs are able to empower their own citizenship and modern personhood based on active participation in civil activity by mediating "contemporary modes of citizenship for South Koreans" as they provide opportunities for adoptees to "perform and actualize their own belonging to the postcolonial, postmodern nation". While South Korean volunteers may end up expanding their own ideas on belonging and national membership, they risk enforcing the paternalism that marks the marginalised position of adoptees as Others. Kim (2014A: 181) recounts an adoptee giving a speech at an event of an NGO, where she expressed her wish for South Koreans to not consider adoptees who lack fluent language ability or understanding of Koreanness as foreigners; but rather to view "Koreanness in a more inclusive way". Kim describes how the interpreter of the speech struggled with the translation, either unable or unwilling to express the meaning, as the statement contradicted with the hegemonic ethnonationalist ideas of belonging. Kim contrasts this example with the larger context of state multiculturalism in South Korea, which is just as unable or unwilling to expand the notion of Koreanness and discard mythical Korean homogeneity, instead focusing on the petition for South Koreans to have a "more open mind" when encountering the Other.

While South Korean volunteers and government position adoptees in a historical and nationalist context and as short-term sojourners and visitors who act as useful economic links between Korea and the West, Kim (2014A: 177) argues that adoptees themselves are working on long-term belonging to the nation "based on locality and grounded in the present time". However, adoptees' warm reception is not only based on ethnic origins, but also class privilege. As Kim (ibid. 182) remarks, "cultural citizenship and incorporation in the nation are no longer solely determined by

essentialized ‘blood’ identities and assimilation into the dominant culture” but the “process is also accompanied by views of personhood inflected with neoliberal rationalities in which citizenship and well-being are increasingly tied to free-market values”. The adoptees’ situation contrasts greatly with other co-ethnic groups such as North Koreans and *joseonjok*, whose backward location in the global order places them at a disadvantage in the boundary negotiation process in comparison to Westernised, middle class adoptees.

These case studies on the manifestation of Otherness and belonging in the current South Korean society demonstrate that despite the new multicultural narrative employed by the South Korean government for around 15 years, the requirements of being Korean both *in body* as well as *in practice* still stand. Koreanness may be attempted to be taught, as in the case of marriage immigrants, and non-South Koreanness may be attempted to be unlearned, as in the case of North Koreans. Clashes in boundary negotiation are caused by Koreans and migrants’ differing views on the type of role and the type of identity migrants should or wish to have in the society: whether they are short-term sojourners or long-term immigrants; or foreign but assimilable members of the Korean family or members of a cultural immigrant community. Besides factors rooted in the mythical, ethnonationalist requirements of being Korean, the boundary-making processes of various Othered groups are also being affected by their value as capitalist subjects and global economic links. Overall, belonging in the South Korean society still seems to be, in the words of Minjeong Kim, elusive to the Othered residents of South Korea.

These positions that Others take up in the Korean society and the on-going boundary negotiations related to belonging naturally have implications on the notion of Korean nationhood. From the perceptive of nation and legal citizenship, Jho (2015: 8) sees this development as a case of stratification of citizenship, which has been studied and observed in the European context. Othered groups are placed in different categories where offered legal rights vary. Moreover, many Othered persons are considered foreigners even after receiving legal citizenship, once again hindering their sense of

belonging. This situation can be compared with the case of Thailand, were McCargo (2011) has studied forms of citizenship and inclusivity of nationhood. McCargo notes that “being a citizen in Thailand is not an either/or matter, but a question of degree” and that “all Thai people may be citizens, but some are more ‘citizenly’ than others” (ibid. 9). Despite the obvious differences in the ethnic and cultural make-up of Thailand and South Korea, as well as their vastly different historical nation-building processes, McCargo’s (ibid. 10) final observation that "in the end, Thai-ness trumps Thai nationality" could be rightfully said of South Korea as well–only replacing the terms with “(South) Koreanness” and “Korean nationality”:

4 Becoming Korean?

In the very first sentence of her ethnographic study on migrant children in Danish day-care, Helle Bundgaard describes the role of the day-care or pre-school as “the most important institution in Denmark when it comes to social integration” (2011: 150). She further continues on to describe the role of day-care as “crucial --- in the organization of family life and in *shaping future citizens*. This is particularly evident when it comes to low-income families and families with immigrant backgrounds” (ibid. 151, emphasis added). Bundgaard points out that it is commonly believed in Denmark that children with immigrant backgrounds ought to attend day-care sooner than rather later, regardless of their parents’ employment status and ability to care for their children during daytime. Authorities encourage parents to sign their children up so that they “can become exposed to Danish social norms and cultural values and the Danish language” (ibid. 151–152). Not only in Denmark, but in all countries with a public, state-sponsored education system, the role of institutionalised education in rearing children towards a desirable outcome defined by the nation-state is a rather apparent.

It could be argued that in South Korea, institutionalised education plays an even bigger part in children’s lives compared to many other countries, due to the sheer number of hours spent in different kinds of educational institutes. According to Statistics Korea, in 2019 almost 50 % of all students studied more than 3 extra hours after their official school hours. 83,5 % of all elementary school students attended private educational institutions, or *hakwon* in Korean, spending on average 6,8 hours per day in them, a number that has been on a constant rise for the last 15 years (Statistics Korea 2020B: 14–15). Almost 57 % of elementary school aged children reported having less than 3 hours of free time per day (ibid. 25). Private academies are a far-reaching extension of the public school. Besides answering parents’ ever-growing desire for better and more effective education in a society characterised by intense competition, they also answer the child-care needs of employed parents in a country with one of the longest average daily working hours in the whole world (OECD 2020).

However, attending private academies is very expensive, and not at all accessible to all Korean citizens. Private education expenses are on a constant rise, having reached a record high of 320 000 won or around 240 euros on average per child per month in 2019 (Statistics Korea 2020C). This is where the regional children's centres, such as my field site, come into play. For many disadvantaged families, sending their children into private academies is not financially feasible, which leaves them with the option of publicly funded children's centres that also provide help with homework and extra tutoring. Regional children's centres may be seen as a replacement for private academies, when attending those is impossible. Although not part of the state-sponsored, public education system, they are part of the civil society and–as in the case of my field–the religion-based civic multiculturalism project, as described in the previous chapter.

During the time I spent on my field, most of the daily activities centred around seemingly rather common South Korean afterschool educational activities. Majority of the day was taken up by general study time aimed to aid the children to review, keep up, and preview the contents of the national curriculum, after which free play time was provided. The centre also offered several themed weekly classes with themes such as arts, practical skills, and morals. If one were to walk into the centre at any time during the opening hours, they would most probably be met with some rather common sight at any Korean afterschool facility: black-haired children sitting down on the floor around low tables, with study books in front of them and pens in their hands; children running around chasing each other, shouting and wrestling; children playing card games and board games around the low tables; or children gathered orderly around the low tables, with plates full of food in front of them.

A telling detail, however, could be observed as soon as one took a look at the centre's weekly schedule, which hung the on the wall in the office room where the centre director and the social worker mostly stayed in during the day. It was presented to me on my first day on the field and included weekly activities that were clearly arranged

specifically due to the nature of the attending students: Korean language learning classes with a Chinese-speaking teacher, as well as a multicultural education class.

The centre also had some rules that would certainly not have been in place had it been a centre for the average Korean schoolchildren: most notably a rule that the children were only allowed to speak Korean when in the centre, regardless of their actual Korean language ability and whether they shared a native language with their friends or not.

Thus, only looking at the formal framework of the centre's operation, it was apparent that the children studying in the afterschool program were not exactly considered Korean or were at least considered somehow lacking by the staff. The children were expected to fulfil some demands that would not have been even brought up to the average Korean schoolchild. They were also expected to have a need for certain kinds of education that would not have been seen as necessary for the average Korean schoolchild.

Repeating Nadya Y. Kim's very apt definition, the common everyday attitude of South Koreans on Koreanness stands as following: "since in the Korean imagination being *Korean in body* rarely has been extricated from being *Korean in practice*–such as speaking the language, knowing the history, and enacting Confucian norms like filial piety–Koreanness is called into question if both cannot be taken for granted" (Kim 2014B: 215, emphasis added). Since most of the children at the afterschool program were not able to fulfil the requirement of being Korean in body–save for one child with two ethnically Korean parents, and possibly those few who had a Korean father–in my analysis I have paid more attention to the facet of being Korean in practice, as it is the part that, as illustrated by Kim's short definition, includes those things that seem learnable skills, such as language ability, history knowledge, and acting according to cultural and social norms. However, I first take a brief look at studies that have discussed how personhood or group boundaries are being reproduced in educational settings in South Korea. Secondly, I continue onto how the notion of being Korean in

body was visible in my field and how it affected the everyday experiences of the children. Thirdly, I concentrate on Koreanness in practice, especially on the acts of studying and learning, as well as the positions of different languages in my field.

4.1 Reproduction of Koreanness in Educational Settings

Although academic literature examining South Korean multicultural education programmes on policy level is rather vast, not many ethnographic studies exist on the reproduction of Koreanness in educational settings in South Korea. Although not an explicitly multiethnic or multicultural context, Junehui Ahn (2015) has examined the kind of personhood that Korean early childhood education aims to produce and produces in practice. The day-care institution where Ahn conducted participant observation had adopted a Western pedagogical strategy, the Reggio Emilia approach. The object of the approach is to cultivate a strong sense of "self", with "creativity, individuality, uniqueness, and diversity" as accompanying values. The end goal is "producing creative, independent, and self-confident citizens" (ibid. 230). Traditional Korean educational goals and values such as "conformity, collectivity, and hierarchy" are seen as backward and problematic in comparison to newly adopted Western ones. These traditional socialisation practices emphasise "children's dependence, obedience, and cooperation", "reflecting the salience of Confucian or collectivistic values". The aim is for children "to embody the inferiority of their own status, the importance of deference to elders, and the subordination of their individual ideas to those of the group" (Ahn ibid. 229). Interestingly, Ahn argues that despite teaching staffs' strong commitment to the goals and values of the Reggio approach, the "bad" traditional Korean values are still being transmitted to the children as they are tightly embedded in the staffs' everyday teaching practices (2015: 225).

Despite the teachers will to cultivate features such as strong, unique self-expression and leadership, skills explicitly valued by their chosen pedagogical approach, Ahn (2015: 233) observed that children who expressed these kinds of behaviours were often viewed by the staff as "pretentious and inconsiderate". While the staff did

encourage the children's self-expression, they often reframed it as not just "free expression of authentic feelings and thoughts", but as "modest, considerate, and thoughtful expression of oneself that considers the feelings and needs of others, not just one's own". This style of expression much better fits the traditional, collective Korean practice. In regard to leadership, staff implied that the influence of a child with strong self-expression who other children often emulated was "excessive and thereby hindered other children's development". In criticising the child for standing out and acting too dominant, the staff paradoxically ended up enforcing the values of "uniform standard and sameness". Through "implicit, unmarked, and situated" everyday practices, the staff were transmitting those very "core educational ideas that [they] actively deny and strongly disapprove of" (ibid. 239).

A study by Jessica Walton (2020) examines the notion of Koreanness and sense of belonging in the classroom, this time not as an explicit socialisation process led by teachers, but as a more "subtle" process of socialisation through the notion of affective citizenship. She focuses on the dynamic processes of inclusion and exclusion enacted between monoethnic and multiethnic Korean students, observing how the current dominant narratives on Korean identity work impact the everyday lived, embodied experiences of students' belonging.

All teachers interviewed by Walton said they "saw the multi-ethnic students as Korean because they were born in Korea, could speak Korean fluently, and were culturally Korean" (2020: 207). Multiethnic students themselves conveyed they felt they had the right to be "different" while simultaneously being Korean, which Walton (ibid. 200) interprets as them seeing "themselves as having 'cultural citizenship' akin to mono-ethnic Koreans", despite their ethnic difference. The lived reality, however, differed from these perceptions greatly, as the embodied actions of doing together and physical touch were used by monoethnic students to include other monoethnic students in their collective "we-ness", while excluding multiethnic students by ignoring their attempts at approaching and interacting with other students.

Walton (2020: 206) observed a difference in the treatment of multiethnic students who could "pass" as Koreans in body and those who looked more different from the general student body. In addition, multiethnic students' backgrounds were valuated on the basis whether their parents were "from poorer countries" or from "the globally powerful --- Western countries", since Whiteness is held as ideal in global racial and classed ideologies. Regarding one's outward appearance, the approximation of "looking Korean" was foremost, but the perceived global order of national prestige also played into the inclusion and exclusion of Othered students in the collective "we-ness" and into the creation of the multiethnic students' sense of belonging. Walton (206–207) argues that "despite the official rhetoric that promotes multiculturalism and global citizenship, the underlying foundation is still based on nation-centered understandings of Korean identity". The impacts are observable in the everyday affective processes of inclusion and exclusion between students. The implicit, narrow definition of Koreanness affects "the ways students learn not only who belongs as 'Koreans' and who does not but also how processes of belonging are enacted and shaped by racialized and classed inequalities".

On the basis of these two studies, the reproduction of Koreanness in educational settings can be defined in two separate ways. Firstly, it seems to be a top-down socialisation process: the creation of a right kind of personhood through the transmission of values and the right way of being Korean in practice to children through reinforcement of certain behaviours and discouragement of others. However, it is simultaneously also a horizontal socialisation process happening between children themselves, as they negotiate the boundaries of a collective "we-ness": who belongs to the in-group as a Korean and who does not.

4.2 Korean in Body

At my field, the most apparent occasion when ethnicity, race, and as an extension Koreanness were discussed explicitly in the centre were multicultural education classes. These classes did not happen every week but were still part of the regular

curriculum and were mostly taught by the social worker who worked fulltime at the centre. Despite the name of the class that referred to *damunhwa*, i.e. cultural differences, the class actually concentrated on racial matters such as people's different outward appearances and racism.

The first time I attended such a class, it started with the social worker going over the world map, introducing the largest country in the world and the smallest country in the world, as well as countries approximately of the same size as South Korea. Notably, the teacher continuously used the common Korean inclusive expression of "our country" (*urinara*, 우리나라) when referring to South Korea, and referred to all other countries as foreign countries, at this point including the listening children in a collective "we". Many of the children then started shouting out their own countries of origin, and the teacher started pointing them out on the map. Once the teacher arrived at Congo, the country of origin of the two black children's parents–both of the black children were born in South Korea themselves, attended a local elementary school, and spoke native-level Korean–the older sibling shouted out "I am Korean!" several times. The teacher did not acknowledge the declaration at all, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. This adamance of the black child on her own Koreanness, in comparison to the other children who did not feel such a need to reassert their belonging, as well as others' lack of reaction, highlighted the outmost marginalised position of the black child in the negotiation process of Koreanness. Due to her skin colour as well as the "poor country" origin of her parents, she was pushed to the in similar fashion as the visibly different-looking children in Walton's study. The way the teacher as well as the other children ignored her outburst seemed to communicate a lack of will to even engage in such strong declaration of identity, strongly clashing with the commonly shared notion of the boundaries of Koreanness.

The class continued on; next examining what kinds of people live in the world. The social worker explained to the children that people living in Asia are called yellow; that people living in Europe are white and have tall noses and light eyes; and that people living in Africa are black and have curly hair and low noses. This categorization

corresponds neatly with the traditional Korean idea of race, as Kim (2014B: 215) describes it in her article: there are three biological races in the world, while "a hybrid race" is rarely considered. Yet, when the term *honhyeol* or mixed-blooded was still in official use until recently, children with one Chinese or Japanese and one Korean parent were considered so, similar to children with one Korean parent and one white or black American parent (Kim 2018: 140). In relation to Filipino marriage migrants, Minjeong Kim observes that they are simply racialized as "darker, foreign-looking people" (ibid.), quoting Nadia Y. Kim (2014B: 215). While Asians maybe considered all part of the same "yellow race", a clear line is still drawn between Koreans and other Asians. The more dissimilar the outward appearance is in comparison to Koreans, the more racialized the person becomes. However, even those not necessarily racialized due to skin colour, i.e. other East Asians, a line is still drawn between them and Koreans.

As mentioned in the second chapter covering the general setting of my field, most of the children at the centre were of East or Southeast Asian descent, belonging to the "yellow race", except for one pair of siblings who were black and of Congolese descent. Further, most of the children were of Chinese, Japanese or Mongolian descent, their appearance rather undistinguishable from Koreans. However, despite what one could call "a shared race" between the children of the centre and the general population, there was never a doubt as to the children's Otherness based on their perceived ethnicity. This was apparent most frequently from the constant labelling of the children by their parents' or their own birth countries as "Chinese" et cetera. This labelling as foreigners was done regardless of their fluency in the Korean language or their actual country of birth.

The children themselves discussed outward appearances and their differences quite often. After the multicultural education class, where the children were taught about the three different races, one of the younger children (himself of Chinese background) walked around the centre and asked everyone who he happened to come by whether they were African in a jokingly manner. The children also commented on my own

appearance readily. One of the children with a Chinese background asked me one day why I was wearing a white dress, since my "skin is white, [my] hair is white and [my] eyes are white already". The older of the black children, the same child that had declared her Koreanness out loud during the multicultural education class, often discussed my appearance. In one occasion, she asked me why I had so much hair on my face and in another, she told me that my nose was so big it was on the way when I drank from a cup. These examples note the acute interest the children had on the different looks between the three different races, but also highlight the salience of the global order and the children's understanding of it. Blackness, in comparison to Asianness and Koreanness, was most curious and subsequently most humorous. The older black child's keen interest in my looks made me wonder about the commentary and treatment she herself had received in her everyday life and at the public school, in less multiethnic environments compared to the children's centre.

Interestingly, the older elementary children once discussed the looks of a pair of siblings who had a Korean father and a Southeast Asian mother, had been born in South Korea, and spoke native Korean. The older sister was in middle school while the younger still in elementary, and they both attended local public schools. The children started comparing the looks of the siblings, noting that the older sister "looked much more Korean" than the younger child, who had thicker lips and larger eyes. The discussion continued on the topic of eyes, discussing how the younger child had nice, large eyes, even though this fact made him "look less Korean". Koreanness, here, was directly related to certain outward features that all the children agreed upon. Despite the fact that the pair of siblings certainly had the same fluency in their native language, the same country of birth, and the same parents, one of them seemed "more Korean" to the children only based on their looks.

On another occasion, I made a mistake of assuming that one of the older elementary children was of Chinese descent, as all the other children in the same friend group. The child looked at me with resentment, exclaiming loudly that she was Korean. The general teacher, who was in the same room with us, hurried to explain that she was

telling the truth and reassured the child. After a moment, she explained to me that the child was attending the centre "due to her situation at home", *despite* her Koreanness. During the discussion, the teacher remarked that she was the only "Korean child" at the centre. The situation appeared to me as a kind of reversed boundary-making. The child's belonging to the centre needed to be justified, as she, as a Korean, was in a sense encroaching on a space defined by the educators as multicultural. Instead of encompassing underneath it Koreanness along with other ethnicities and/or cultures present in the South Korean society, multiculturalism was presented as the negative, opposite side of Koreanness.

Just as described in Walton's study, being Korean in body appeared in my field as a much more complex notion than just having or not having Korean blood. Being Korean in body seems to require being of Korean descent, but also "looking Korean", or at least approximating it. The children with East Asian looks, rather indistinguishable from their Korean peers were categorised by their own or their parents' country of origin, automatically rendering them foreigners. In the case of the children with one Korean and one foreign parent, despite their arguable blood connection, their outward appearance brought their Koreanness into question. Furthermore, they were automatically categorised by the general teacher as in belonging to the category of multicultural children, as she recognised only one child at the centre as a "Korean child".

4.3 Korean in Practice

The topics that Nadia Y. Kim (2014B: 215) identifies in her article–such as "speaking the language, knowing the history, and enacting Confucian norms"–as parts of being Korean *in practice* are all skills that can be taught at educational facilities. When considering those Korean "social norms and cultural values" (in reference to Bundgaard 2011: 151) to which a society would want to expose children with immigrant backgrounds as young as possible, South Korea has one that could indeed be said to require an institutionalised educational setting: the act of *studying* in itself.

There exists a wide range of literature looking into the importance placed on education in the South Korean society. The literature covers many aspects of what is called the *education fever* (*gyoyukyeol*, 교육열), analysing everything from the roots of the pervasive phenomenon, its role in the country's rapid economic development starting from the 1960s, to the current socio-economic implications of the society's extreme competitiveness. As Michael Seth (2002: 9–10) notes in his book on the educational situation in South Korea, Koreans themselves attribute this heightened importance of formal education to Confucianism, explaining that "education in traditional Korea was valued as both a means of self-cultivation and a way of achieving status and power. An individual could become virtuous through the study of ethically oriented Chinese classics; he could then play and informal role as a moral exemplar and teacher and advisor to others, thus enhancing his status and influence in society." Seth further remarks that education heavily focused on memorising and mastering the Chinese classics.

On my field, the importance placed on education was–as the field itself was an educational institute–the very reason for the existence of such an institution, as well as explicitly present in the everyday practices of the centre. Thus, the acts of *studying* and, even more importantly if possible, *learning* became quickly two of the most salient objects of my observation. Returning to Bundgaard's words, it seemed that one of the most important goals of the centre, in its role of *shaping future citizens*, was indeed teaching the children the right–the Korean–way to study. The centre also integrated those educational topics that are deemed most meaningful in the practice of being Korean. Besides those few formal classes that indicated otherwise–the multicultural education class and the Korean language learning classes–the activities of the centre were arranged to closely resemble the common Korean afterschool education model, stressing the points that the South Korean society considers salient markers of successful study, such as English ability, book-reading, and disciplined self-study. The pedagogical approach closely resembled a classic memorisation focused style.

Børge Bakken examines the Confucian understanding of education in his dissertation on China, painting a picture of human improvement based on exemplarity and social control. The overarching idea is the thought that "all persons are potentially perfectible through education" (Bakken 1994: 61), and how a person turns out is dependent on the educational environment. In other words, education and educational environment are the key players in shaping an appropriate future adult member of the society. This is very much in line with my own anecdotal experience of the South Korean society, where common rhetoric places repeated disciplined practice over innate talent in regard to success. Daily discourse often focuses on how many hours were spent or what procedures were used in the process of practice, rather than on the innate ability of persons.

Bakken identifies imitation and repetition as the core of education: imitation develops the child into a social being, binding members of the society together; whereas repetition ensures stability through habituation. Repetition, rote memorization, and recitation are indeed pervasive in the South Korean educational system as well. Not only once but several times during my fieldwork did I help students memorise fairly long passages of text for their English classes, where they were expected to recite them by heart. The evaluation, as described to me by students, was to be conducted on the level of accuracy; no evaluation was done on the level of understanding the contents of the text.

Repetition was also central to studying at the centre. Students with higher level Korean language skills had each their own extra study workbook in mathematics as well as in Korean that followed the national curriculum of the public school. The students were expected to complete a certain number of pages every single day, repeatedly practicing the same types of problems. If possible, repetition was even more apparent with the children with lower Korean language skills: for mathematics, they used communal study books that constituted of rows of similar problems, each book filled with only one type: either addition, subtraction, or multiplication. The

books even had a very repetitive look as there were no text or pictures in between rows of similar mathematical problems. Just as the older students, the younger children were expected to finish a certain number of pages every single day, repeating the same style of problem anywhere from fifty to one hundred times per study session.

For study of the Korean language, the younger students who could not yet speak Korean expect for a few limited utterances were provided with study sheets made by the social worker or the general teacher. A single study sheet contained the simplest possible forms of Korean hangul syllables in alphabetical order. The study sheet was photocopied, and each child was expected to finish around two to three copies every day, copying the syllabic writing in rows. During the copying process, no teaching of the characters' correspondence to pronounced sounds or Korean words was done. After the copying process was finished, there was a repeated practice of reading through the syllables with a teacher and repeating the sounds of the syllables after her. The general teacher often gave me this task of reading the syllables for a child to repeat after. It seemed that native level accuracy of pronunciation was not what was sought after at this point, but rather consistent, daily repetition. It must be noted that this was not all the Korean language teaching provided for the children at the centre. As mentioned before, a Chinese speaking language teacher came to the centre two times a week, giving the younger children one-on-one tutoring. However, this repetitive process of solving similar mathematical problems and copying syllables was a part of the normal schedule and took place every single day during my fieldwork.

Bakken (1994: 135) further deepens the meaning of repetitive imitation of exemplary models, stating that "learning from models is more than a pedagogical method only". Bakken explains that following exemplary models is "an important element of the overall project of stability and social control in China" (ibid.). Emulation of exemplary models, who represent the standard of moral and social norms, ensures proper conduct of people at all times, even unsupervised. This is in line with Seth's description on traditional Korea and how education was a means of self-cultivation as well as a

path to becoming virtuous, after which one could become a moral exemplar for others to modulate. Indeed, the Chinese character for "teaching" (敎 or *gyo*, 교) in its Korean usage still retains another meaning of "emulating another" or "modelling oneself after an example".

The program of the centre may have been constructed through the idea of having the children follow the exemplary models of the proper way Koreans should study and which subjects, and what kind of experiences they should go through. However, while the children were indeed participating in these practices of Koreanness, due to their different levels of competence their apparent success in following the example varied greatly.

The children were all at different stages of integration into the typical world of their peers, mostly depending on their age, Korean language ability and school performance. A few of the younger, elementary school children attended a near-by public elementary school due to their near-native or native Korean language skills. The rest attended a school for immigrants, operated by the same evangelical church that operated the afterschool centre. As for the older, middle school children, most of them attended the local middle school; only one student had transferred back to the immigrant school after having spent some years at the local school, mostly due to the immense pressure of the mainstream schooling system.

Despite the fact that the students all had varying language abilities and had spent different lengths of time living in the country, all the elementary aged children attended a few classes together: notably the multicultural education class and a book-reading class, the purpose of which seemed to be teaching ethics rather than reading books. The teachers of these two classes were different, but both closely followed a similar teaching style. As the book-reading class was taught with a higher frequency, once every week, I will concentrate on this class in this part of my analysis.

The classroom was small, and at the beginning of the class, the children were divided into small groups, each sitting together around a low table. The groups were usually arranged so that each group included a few of the older elementary students whose Korean language skills and overall ability were up to bar with the task. Those younger students, whose Korean language skills were limited to a few utterances, were always separated from each other and distributed evenly among the groups. One child was usually chosen as a representative or "leader" of their group. When it was one of the older children, they were expected to be somewhat responsible for their younger group members in trying to keep them in check. However, the representative was not necessarily always one of the older children or those with the best language ability: also a child with enthusiastic attitude despite their limited understanding could be chosen. In this case, the representative was only given concrete tasks such as distributing paper or pens, and the more complicated tasks would fall on the eldest, more linguistically competent child.

My own position was usually at the back of the classroom, slightly separated from the study tables. It was a frequent occurrence that a few of the more active children would roll on the floor towards my direction, attempt to climb to my seat, or hide behind me. I was thus often responsible for the task of helping the teacher with keeping the children sitting in their proper seats, and–most importantly–with proper posture. A sentence that could always be heard multiple times during each class was a bid for the children to "sit up straight[1]"; reclining comfortably or lying down on the floor was not allowed. When the outside teacher's as well as my own authority was exhausted, as happened with frequency, the older children would often take the matter into their own hands and fetch the social worker to come bring order into the chaotic classroom. Sometimes, the social worker would only sit in the room and help manage the children's positions; sometimes, she would bring those most unable to sit up straight and still in their own seats outside of the classroom to calm down.

[1] "똑바로 앉아!"

The book-reading class, despite its name, involved surprisingly little book-reading. Sometimes, the teacher would read a story from a book while pausing to pose questions to the children; very often, she would present an already simplified form of the story in the medium of a slide presentation or short animations. The stories always either had a morals related topic such bullying, or an emotional skills related topic such as how to deal with other people's unfair attitudes towards oneself.

At the end of each class, each child was given a short, maximum two-page study sheet which included questions on the contents of that day's topic. The questions were not difficult and usually only required a word-to-word answer from the presented material, but were often constructed on an abstract, emotional level. Sometimes the study sheet was already used during the class and children were given tasks of, for example, drawing and colouring something according to the teacher's description.

These tasks were the same for all students, regardless of whether they understood the contents of the class or the questions, or whether they could write and read Korean or not. Many a time, an older child would be asked to either help the younger to write down a given answer, or hand over their own study sheet for the younger to copy the strokes on the paper, even if they could not write yet and were only copying the example, going through the outward appearance of writing. I also often helped the younger children to write down sentences that they could not write themselves yet and sometimes did not understand the meaning of. In the case of drawing or craft tasks given already during the class, the children were also often expected to perform according to the instructions, regardless of whether they could understand what the point of the task was or not. During one book-reading class the students were expected to draw and colour a cat corresponding to the teacher's descriptions, choosing from options that represented different emotions. The younger children visibly did not understand what the options were, but the teacher attempted the have them choose with the help of older children and complete the task anyway.

In other words, in certain situations the children were all going through the same motions of studying, imitating the expected model, regardless of their current level of competence. However, although all children were performing the same acts of studying, their actual degree of participation differed greatly; some were able to listen to the teacher's story, understand her questions and answer them, and complete given written tasks; others were limited to sitting with proper posture and copying strokes that they did not understand the meaning of. It seems that what these children with more limited participation were learning was less the actual contents of the class, and more the proper, right way of studying. This performance of given actions, with limited participation in the actual content, was pervasive in my field.

Theorising an anthropological understanding of learning, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991:37) examine learning as a social practice that is "an aspect of all activity" and as "increasing participation in communities of practice" (ibid. 49). Rather than the acquisition of abstract, transferable knowledge or the cognitive processes of an individual, Lave and Wenger place importance on actual engagement and the situated nature of learning through social co-participation in activity. They pick the classical concept of apprenticeship as the starting point of their theory construction, coming up with the concept of *legitimate peripheral participation*. With legitimacy, Lave and Wenger refer to the learners' belonging in the community, whereas "peripherality" describes the learner's locality in the social world, which can be "multiple, varied, more- or less-engaged and -inclusive" (ibid. 35–36). Importantly, they note that "changing locations and perspectives are part of actors' learning trajectories, developing identities, and forms of membership" (ibid. 36). As there is no centre in a community, the goal of learning is not movement from a peripheral location to a central one. Rather, what learning should lead to in the end, is *full participation* in a community of practice (ibid. 37): a process easily illustrated by an example such as a shoemaker apprentice becoming a master shoemaker through the process of learning. Lave and Wenger further make sure to distinguish between intentional instruction and learning, remarking that "legitimate peripheral participation is not itself an educational form, --- a pedagogical technique or a teaching

technique" but rather "a way of understanding learning" (ibid. 40). What is being taught is not necessarily what is being learnt in a given situation.

Even though Lave and Wenger (1991: 96–97) limit their ethnographical examples to more traditional apprentice-type learning situations and easily definable communities of practice, reserving further analyses of schooling for future, their analytical approach to learning describes aptly what was happening in the study rooms of my field site. In the case of schooling, Lave and Wenger separate the goals of directive teaching and the unintended practice resulting from the limitations set by directive teaching as the *teaching curriculum* and the *learning curriculum*. The teaching curriculum is rather self-explanatory concept; in the case of the book-reading class, this included those moral lessons and emotional skills the teacher wanted to pass onto the students, as well as those appropriate behavioural models such as sitting up straight that are part of the Korean tradition of studying. The teaching curriculum defines and thus limits the learning opportunities of the learners, creating a field of resources available for them, in other words the learning curriculum. The teacher controls the situation and the meaning of what is learned, while the learning curriculum arises out of the participation of the learners in the community of practice through this pedagogical situation. What the children were learning in the book-reading class, was not only dependent on the instruction of the teacher, but also on the practices of the community of practice that the teacher was representing, as well as their own current level of competence–in other words, their locality in the periphery. One of the children might have been answering a moral question asked by teacher, which usually had an expected word-to-word exemplary model in the educational material; while another may have been learning the proper posture of studying in that particular community of practice, "sitting up straight", through emulating the exemplary model.

This separation of teaching curriculum and learning curriculum could be also applied to Ahn's study as an interpretation of the socialisation process in early childhood education and the production of Korean personhood. While in that case, the teaching curriculum was the Western Reggio approach aiming to teach children modernised

styles of self-expression, the learning curriculum consisted of the more traditional Korean views of self and behaviours deemed appropriate for children, transmitted through the teachers' implicit practices. In the case of my field, there seemed to be no such strong ideological division between the teaching curriculum and the learning curriculum. Whether this due to the children's centre being keen on more traditional Korean pedagogical methods, not viewing them as backwards or whether the centre was just less ambitious regarding new pedagogical techniques and more focused on the general social and emotional welfare of the children was unclear and would require interviews with the adults working at the centre. In any case, the explicit goals of the teaching curriculum in my field greatly diverged from the explicit goals of the educational institution observed in Ahn's study, as they seemed to more broad and vague such as preparing the children for future success in studying and working life in the Korean society, as well as teaching them proper management of self and one's emotions in the face of discrimination or other kinds of interpersonal difficulties. However, the learning curriculum and the values it taught were very similar if not exactly the same as what is referred to as the "implicit cultural practices" or "folk pedagogy" in Ahn's (2015: 238) study.

Many special events that were carried out during my fieldwork proceeded in a similar fashion to the book-reading class. For example, in one occasion, the centre took all the attending students to a nearby shopping centre to see a film. The film chosen was a live action version of a Disney animated musical, acted and sung in English with Korean subtitles provided on the screen. The children were taken through this experience with appropriate meticulousness: each child was bought a box of popcorn and a large soda, regardless of whether they expressed wanting one or not. The children were led into the cinema and shown their respective seats, the smallest children sitting down with their legs dangling off the edge of their seats.

As the film started, it became apparent that many of the children were not able to understand the contents of the film as following required rather speedy subtitle reading skills. The two and a half hours that the film took finish were spent with

frequent remainders for children to sit still and quiet and not converse with each other, as well as the children's frequent trips to the bathroom, what seemed short escapes from the dark room requiring a long period of sitting down quietly. What seemed to matter to the adults was the participation of the children in the culture experience regardless of their level of understanding, as well as conducting themselves appropriately, imitating the staff and the older children's example. The children, again, participated in the experience, each according to their own limited competence.

In a similar fashion, an art competition meant for all the children's centres in the local area was held during my fieldwork. The theme of the competition was "my neighbourhood". An outside arts teacher arrived at the centre to conduct one art class, armed with several kinds of art supplies such as crayons and water colours. She showed the children different kinds of example images of neighbourhoods, after which the children were asked to draw their own according to the theme. Imitation was again present as a pedagogical approach. Many children were unable to finish their drawings and paintings in the given limited time; it was difficult for some to understand what exactly was asked of them, and many lacked self-confidence and were afraid to even try in the beginning. Interestingly, the next day I saw the director of the centre as well as the social worker colouring the children's unfinished drawings and paintings, joking and laughing as they simultaneously worked busily to complete each drawing. Once again, the children participated in a limited fashion, and the more experienced completed the procedure. This was in no way seen as a hindrance to submitting the artwork in the competition. It was more important to proceed with the expected protocol, as to have the children go through the motions of taking part in a competition, and, as described in the following paragraphs, in an award giving ceremony.

On the day of the award giving ceremony, the director confided in me that every single one of the children in our centre were to be awarded for their drawings, except for a single one. The single child not to be awarded happened to be a younger elementary school child with very limited Korean language skills, as well as regular visible hardship

adjusting to the centre's strict study schedule that required a lot of time sitting down in front of different kinds of papers. I was surprised at this piece of information, as I had expected that only a few chosen ones would receive awards, as was my presupposition regarding such competitions. Before leaving for the ceremony, the director gathered the children into the common room and lectured them on the proper ways to receive the award they were going to be given. She instructed them on proper posture as we all as the manners of respectful handshaking. The whole centre then took off in an orderly walking bus. As we arrived at the location of the ceremony, each local children's centre was sitting on the floor level huddled in more or less orderly lines, waiting their turn. A long ceremony of giving out awards was carried out, each child standing up in their turn and walking to the front of the crowd, to stand in front of a local official who rattled off their names and the names of the centre, and the award they were being given. Each child then received an honorary certificate and a stack of postcards that had their drawing printed on them.

Awards and honorary certificates are an important feature of the Korean education system, as symbols of evaluation that makes the exemplary norm visible (Bakken 1994: 195). At my field, on multiple occasions children came to the centre in the afternoon from school, showing off proudly an honorary certificate they had received at school as a token of their exemplary execution of a certain act, such as recitation or essay writing. The director of the centre always took the honorary certificate in her hands, declaring loudly how well the child had done and showing it off to other teachers and the children. In this case as well, the director and the other staff were enthusiastic about having each child go through the same experience and emulate the appropriate behaviour for such an occasion. The children themselves, once again, participated on different levels but all in limited capacity, the most peripheral of them regulated to sitting in the audience and following the award acceptance ceremony only from the role of audience.

Looking at these examples, defining the community of practice that the children were legitimately participating in from their peripheral location may seem complex at first

sight. However, Lave and Wenger's (1991: 98) definition of a community of practice is not restricted to easily defined groups of masters and apprentices. According to them, "a community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice". It is most easily defined through the reproductive cycle of the community: as Lave and Wenger explain, high-school children learning physics in a high school setting are not in the process of reproducing the community of physicists, but rather, the community of schooled adults (ibid. 99-100). Similarly, looking at the notion of Koreanness from the perspective of those learnable skills and behaviours that constitute a part of it, the South Korean society can be re-imagined as a community of practice. The children can be described as sorts of *cultural apprentices*, with the hopeful endpoint of full participation in the South Korean society.

The children's limited, peripheral participation was perceivable on multiple levels. As mentioned, in the classroom the children all engaged at different levels, were given different amounts of responsibility and different tasks according to their level of competence. They often depended on each other for learning, as is noted to be common in all kinds of apprenticeships (Lave and Wenger 1991: 93). This continuum of limited participation in the classroom can easily be contrasted with the continuum of the children's participation in the wider society. The children all held different locations of peripherality in the South Korean society compared to each other and their Korean peers: as previously mentioned, those with a higher competence level in following the example and "performing Koreaness"–namely, more advanced language ability and greater potential for acceptable school performance–attended a local school, whereas those with a lower competence level attended a school for immigrant children, segregated from the common population.

Following, the meaning of peripherality in this analysis seems rather more uncomplicated to define. Many of the children were literal newcomers, having immigrated into the country only within a period of a few years. This locality resulted in their lack of access to resources. Even those children who had been born in the

country lacked access to resources, for reasons such as employment difficulty of their immigrant parents due to limited language skills and a lack of citizenship. Being school children makes them peripheral by definition, as all school children are at large kept away from participating in the wider society and the adult social world (Lave and Wenger 1991: 104); but the children at the centre were peripheral also in relation to the average Korean school child. However, as the children learnt to perform Koreanness at a higher level of competence, i.e. as their ability to study in the right, Korean way and their Korean language skills improved, the children moved forward on the continuum of peripheral participation, coming closer to the model of participation typical of their average Korean peers.

Lastly, according to Lave and Wenger's (1991: 92) description, legitimacy or belonging is often produced in relation of apprentices to their master; or in cases of a less explicitly defined community of practice, from familial relations as well as membership of the wider community. In the case of children, the legitimacy or the matter of belonging can be said to have been awarded to them by the multiculturalist narrative that the South Korean government employs in policy-making today, re-defining South Korea as a nation that includes also people who did not fit the previous one-blood, one-language, one-culture narrative. However, I argue that the failure of the children in being *Korean in body*, ultimately brought into question the legitimacy of the children's participation, or their belonging in the South Korean society.

I have now observed how the children participated in teaching and events organised by the centre and analysed the process of learning how to perform practices of Koreanness through the notion of legitimate peripheral participation. As observed, the most salient marker defining the children's locality was predictably their language skills. As an important instrument present in all social practices, language is often mentioned as one of the most important markers of ethnic identity and group membership in anthropological studies. It is no wonder that it was an important boundary marker when observing the degree of participation of the children in the surrounding community. However, it seemed it was not only the command of the

Korean language that contributed to how others perceived the children's "degree of Koreanness". Koreanness was defined by language on multiple levels: both by the command of Korean and the command of English, as well as, rather surprisingly, the lack of command of the child's first language.

The children's level of Korean ability not only played a part in defining what roles adults gave the children at the centre and what school they attended, but also played a part in the internal relations of the children as well. The children rarely resisted the rule of only Korean allowed at the centre. Although they often resorted to speaking Chinese among themselves during play time, especially in cases of disagreement and conflict, when reminded of the rule by teachers, the children usually stopped speaking Chinese quite fast and did not seem reluctant to try to communicate in Korean for the most part.

The staff at the centre, when speaking to the children, always referred to other children not only by names but with the appropriate titles of older brother or sister, younger brother or sister, or friend (when the children were of the same age). Children themselves also placed great value on the hierarchical system of the Korean culture and language. Referring to one's elder with the pronoun "you" (*neo*, 너) can be very rude, while among children it is commonly used to refer to someone younger. There were occasions where children whose Korean skills were still rather lacking would make the mistake of referring to an older child with the pronoun instead of the appropriate title, resulting in immense backlash from the older child. In one such occasion, during a rather chaotic play of tag with much yelling and enthusiastic running, a younger child with very limited Korean skills referred to an older one with the pronoun "you". The older child was immediately offended, loudly declaring the younger child was rude, and yelled for the teacher to come, explaining what had happened. Although the younger child's language ability was clearly known by the older child and they shared the same mother tongue, the older wanted to make the younger's mistake of breaking the Korean hierarchical system explicitly known. This made the older child's position of power known, not only as the older in age, but also

as the one with better command of both the Korean language and the cultural practice of hierarchy.

In addition, in several occasions, older students with more fluency in Korean expressed exaggerated annoyance in situations where a teacher asked them to explain something to their peer with lower Korean language ability. The closer in age the children were, the more explicit this disdain usually was. One child also recounted to me with enthusiasm how one of the students studying with the first graders was actually a year older than them in age but studying with them due to his lack of language skills. Expectedly, this child was not referred to as “big brother” by those younger than him, even when they had fluent Korean language ability. The children’s own requirement of upholding proper Korean hierarchy was in relation to the speaker and recipient’s language skills: regardless of skills, all were expected to use proper Korean honorifics for their elders; but proper Korean honorifics were not needed when referring to those whose own skills were still lacking, regardless of actual age. Their position could be easily recognised as more peripheral in relation to the hierarchical system of the Korean language and culture. This practice could be interpreted as part of the socialisation process happening between the students, in the fashion of the process of inclusion and exclusion as described by Walton (2020) in her study. A part of the boundary-making process, the implicit rules on the usage of honorifics among the children marked some above others in the manifested degree of Koreanness.

Mi Ok Kang (2015: 40) describes how “under the threefold hierarchy of language, identity, and culture in the economically semi-imperial context, Koreans are positioned under the powerful Others with Western, White, English-speaking identities, but above the powerless migrants whose skin is darker, national origins are economically developing, and socio-economic status is at the bottom of the hierarchy”. This hierarchy that included languages was also apparent from the positions of Chinese and English at my field, as foreign languages both. When searching for a field and attempting to build rapport, I already took advantage of my own background as well as my knowledge of the value placed on English, volunteering to help with English

tutoring at the field site. In the current South Korean society, one could argue that English has replaced the old Chinese classics as a gateway to prestige and power. In their aptly named article *Class and Cosmopolitan Striving*, So Jin Park and Nancy Abelmann (2004: 647) discuss the English education mania permeating the South Korean society and link English education both with a wish for domestic class mobility as well as with a "cosmopolitan striving in the global order". They recognise the roots of the English education fever partly as result of the state's globalisation policies but take their observation further on how English education has exceeded the need for a certain theoretical mastery in order to pass college entrance exams successfully. As they examine the meanings that English education carries with ethnographic examples of three different mothers that are the primary managers of their children's education, they finally conclude that "the idea of what it means to be South Korean is transforming: increasingly, to be South Korean means to be South Korean 'in the world'–a prospect that calls for the mastery of English as an index of cosmopolitan striving" (ibid. 650). A South Korean who speaks Korean is just that, a South Korean; but a South Korean who speaks Korean and English is a successful South Korean.

Han Huamei (2014: 61–62), who examines the role of language in immigrantization in his article on Chinese immigrants in Canada, explains how native-English speaking 1.5 generation is seen as Western by other Chinese immigrants, but as racialised immigrants by the white majority. Huamei also marks that "by recognizing English as a marker of Canadianness and Whiteness, when comparing to other Immigrants who spoke English less fluently whom they judged as not making efforts to learn English, they enjoyed the psychical benefits of being the 'good Immigrants' and feeling better integrated than 'a lot of' other Immigrants". This politization and valuation of language was clear on my field as well. Speaking Chinese was forbidden in the centre, but the reason I was able to gain access myself was the potential benefit I could bring to the children through English tutoring. Although in the end, I ended up teaching only the older, middle school children, the director's strong initial wish was I would teach all the age groups and I did attempt to have a few sessions with the younger children as well. The director wished for me to teach even the youngest age group, most of whom

could not yet speak Korean either. In addition, before I left my field, the centre director asked me whether I knew of any other young people who would be able to come to the centre and help the older children with their English. There were English language books in the bookshelves that lined all walls in the study rooms, and English tutoring was part of the middle school students' daily schedule after dinner. The "cosmopolitan striving in the global order" was clearly perceivable at the centre and learning English seen as necessary for a child in order to become a satisfactory member of the adult Korean community.

On the other hand, the languages of China as well as the children's other countries of origin were not worthy of pursue, perceived to be below South Korea in the global order. Only on one occasion did I hear the director discuss the potential benefit of bilingualism with a child's parent. The centre was moving, and some of the more involved parents were helping carrying the furniture and other belongings of the centre to the new location, including the mother of one of the first graders who had native level skills in both Korean and Chinese, as well as basic education in beginner level English. The conversation touched upon the possibility of bilingualism and Chinese language skills being of help to the child in his studies in the future and even later, in his career. I heard this topic only ever discussed once, and only in regard to this one particular child. It seems that only his already strong command of Korean, basic English skills, as well as otherwise satisfactory performance of being Korean in practice enabled the improvement of his Chinese ability to be up for discussion at all. The other Chinese children did receive education in their mother tongue at the immigrant school once or twice bringing home Chinese homework to the children's centre. However, as an institution with a clear aim to provide the children with education that would help them grow as well-educated Korean children should, providing them with extra teaching in their mother tongue was not on the list of important subjects, whereas English was.

In this previous example, only a good command of the Korean language opened up the discussion of improvement of other language skills–with the exception of English,

which has become a marker of a successful South Koreanness. However, not only the command of Korean, but the *lack of command* of native tongue could be seen as a marker of Koreanness in my field. As Kang (2015: 34) summarises, "ordinary Koreans [are] zealous about becoming bilingual speakers of English and Korean, while migrants with diverse languages [feel] the need to give up their language and identity to quickly acquire the Korean and English skills they needed to survive. Their languages, in this context, [become] redundant and useless, as [do] their identities".

A phrase I have often heard directed at myself while living in South Korea, always meant as a praise, is "you've become all Korean!"[2] This sentence was ever-present at my field as well, spoken out with a humorous tone whenever one of the children acted in a way the adult staff perceived to be somehow indisputably, inherently Korean in nature. In the most interesting case, an older child with Chinese background who had been living in South Korea for a while, was asked to help translate a word for a younger child who could not understand a particular phrasing on his study sheet, no matter how the teacher tried to explain it to him. The older child who was asked to help looked around the room, perplexed, remained silent, and did not look back at the teacher. The teacher burst out in friendly laughter, placing her hand on the child's shoulder and declaring, "*Y* has become all Korean! He doesn't even remember how to say this in Chinese anymore!" Through forgetting his first language, the child's performance of being Korean in practice had, in the teacher's eyes, reached a certain level at that moment. The utterance itself was obviously part of humorous teasing, not a declaration of the teacher's serious beliefs regarding the child's ethnic or even national group membership; but the child's lack of fluency in his native tongue was enough to spark this reaction.

[2] "한국 사람 다 됐네요!"

5 Discussion and Concluding Remarks

In this thesis, I have examined the notions of ethnicity, nation, and belonging in the context of South Korea, in order to investigate whether the scope of these notions will allow the reproduction of new South Koreans from multicultural subjects through education.

Studies on Otherness in South Korea have demonstrated that despite the state's sudden switch from ethnonational narrative to a more inclusive narrative based on culture, South Korea is in fact still a society that ties belonging on the two indispensable requirements of being Korean both *in body* and *in practice*. Failure to achieve either hinders the person's claim to membership in the Korean nation as well as their sense of belonging. Examples of those regarded by the surrounding society as failing to be (South) Korean in practice are groups such as Korean adoptees and North Korean migrants. On the other hand, children of multicultural families, as well as immigrant children such as many of the children in my field, could be regarded as examples of failing to be Korean in body. Migrant groups such as marriage and labour immigrants seem to be situated quite far from achieving either requirement; although, marriage immigrants are the object of a state multiculturalism project that wishes to teach them how to perform Koreanness in practice in relation to the gendered expectations that the society holds for these wives and mothers of current and future Koreans.

In my field, discourses on Koreanness were present both in explicit as well as implicit practices. The explicit discourse on Koreanness, most salient in the context of the multicultural education class as well as in the everyday labelling of the multicultural children as "Chinese" or "Congolese" et cetera, presented an essentialist, traditional folk notion of Koreanness. However, the explicit and implicit educational practices presented a part of Koreanness as learnable and thus more accessible, available to the children through the *learning curriculum* or the *implicit cultural practices* of the centre.

The children were all situated on a continuum of participation in the cultural community of practice of Koreans, their positions dynamic and in constant change as their language skills improved and they learned to better emulate the expected proper behaviour of a Korean child, such as sitting up straight during study time. Imitation of those students with a higher degree of competence as well as following teachers' explicit instructions were key to mobility on the road of cultural apprenticeship, where the aim seemed to be movement from their original peripheral locality towards a "potential" full participation in the South Korean society. This involves also the construction of their identity as a process of boundary negotiation of Koreanness: "learning is not merely a condition for membership but is itself an evolving form of membership" (Lave and Wenger 1991: 53).

Despite this implication that a part of Koreanness is learnable, what still seems to hinder multicultural children from acquiring full legitimacy, or a complete sense of belonging in the nation, is the failure in being Korean in body. This illustrates how despite the official narrative of a new culture-based nation, Koreanness seems to indeed be an exclusive ethnic group membership above a nationality or a citizenship. The Other may be partly incorporated in the society, but, in the words of Minjeong Kim, belonging remains elusive. The multicultural children are presented with a possibility of movement toward full participation, but it seems unlikely that it will ever manifest in its full potential, if the narrative of Koreanness does not continue to shift. The needed shift may be one toward a truly multiethnic Korean nationhood separated from Korean ethnic group membership, which encompasses Others under the common nominator of Korean nationality on the condition of cultural unity; or it may be one toward a truly multicultural Korean nationhood that acknowledges the existence of separate collective minority identities. While both seem unlikely to manifest in the near future, the former option seems more probable as per the analysis of various academics, who see the current state multiculturalist project rather as a state multiethnic project, with "multiculturalism" simply being a more attractive naming option.

Despite the official switch to a multicultural national narrative, recent developments in the frequency and volume of expressions of xenophobic sentiment in public seem to suggest that the ethnonationalist mindset of South Koreans is not disappearing and may even be heading in the same direction as in the West. The year 2018 saw public outrage and anti-immigration, anti-refugee demonstrations as around 500 Yemeni nationals arrived in the southern holiday island of Jeju to seek asylum (Ock 2019). The threat that Koreans feel against the Other is not small. However, as a nation that often prides itself in its "quickness" and ability to adapt to new situations, as illustrated by the country's speedy embrace of a completely new national narrative in the short span of a few years, we may yet prove to be surprised. Quoting Lim, "while multiculturalism may mean one thing today in South Korea, it may mean something very different five, ten, or twenty years from now" (Lim 2014: 54). While the South Korean state project aims to transform its multicultural subjects, it itself has already been transformed by them, in legal as well as social ways, already as early as in the 1990s at the dawn of South Korean mass immigration. At the moment, "becoming Korean" in the full meaning of the notion seems unattainable for multicultural children, but I argue they themselves may play an important role in the societal transformation that could possibly enable this process in the future.

Although South Korean multiculturalism has been studied to a great extent despite it being a relatively new phenomenon, ethnographic data on the everyday lived reality of this new, "multicultural" generation of children growing up in South Korea is still very limited. What is more, my own field was limited to a rather confined space defined markedly as multicultural, which sometimes manifested in the need to justify the presence of "non-multicultural" Koreans in it. The scope of my data limited the possibility of analysing the children's peripheral locality in the context of wider society. In the future, it may be more fruitful to not limit research to only such segregated, multiethnic localities, but to follow the lives of multicultural children as they navigate both inherently "multicultural" as well as "non-multicultural" spaces in their lives in the South Korean society. Including more observations on the interactions between

ethnic Koreans and Othered children will illuminate the boundary-making process of Koreanness even more clearly.

References and Bibliography

Abelmann, Nancy and So Jin Park. 2004. “Class and Cosmopolitan Striving: Mothers' Management of English Education in South Korea.” *Anthropological Quarterly* Vol. 77 No. 4: pp. 645–672.

Abelmann, Nancy, Gayoung Chung, Sejung Ham, Jiyeon Kang and Q-Ho Lee. 2014. “Makeshift Multiculturalism: The Transformation of Elementary School Teacher Training.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 95–115. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Ahn, Ji-Hyun. 2012. “Transforming Korea into a multicultural society: reception of multiculturalism discourse and its discursive disposition in Korea.” *Asian Ethnicity* Vol. 13 No. 1: pp. 97–109.

Ahn, Junehui. 2015. “Finding a Child’s Self: Globalization and the Hybridized Landscape of Korean Early Childhood Education.” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* Vol. 46 No. 3: pp. 224–243.

Bakken, Børge. 1994. *The Exemplary Society: Human Improvement, Social Control and the Dangers of Modernity in China*. Oslo: University of Oslo.

Bundgaard, Helle. 2011. “Day-Care in Denmark: The Key to Social Integration.” In *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*, edited by Karsten Paerregaard and Karen Olwig: pp. 150–167. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Choo, Hae Yeon. 2014. “The Needs of Others: Revisiting the Nation in North Korean and Filipino Migrant Churches in South Korea.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 119–141. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Dawson, Walter. 2010. “Private tutoring and mass schooling in East Asia: reflections of inequality in Japan, South Korea, and Cambodia.” *Asia Pacific Education Review* Vol. 11 No. 1: pp. 14–24.

Duncan, John. 1998. "Proto-nationalism in Premodern Korea." In *Perspectives on Korea*, edited by Sang-oak Lee and Duk-Soo Park. Sydney: Wild Peony Press.

Eriksen, T.H. 2001. "Ethnic identity, national identity and intergroup conflict: The significance of personal experiences." In *Social identity, intergroup conflict, and conflict reduction*, edited by Richard D. Ashmore, Lee Jussim and David Wilder: pp. 42–70. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Freeman, Caren. 2004. “Marrying Up and Marrying Down: The Paradoxes of Marital Mobility for Chosonjok Brides in South Korea.” 2004. In *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia,* edited by Nicole Constable: pp. 80–100. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Han, Geon-Soo. 2007. “Multicultural Korea: Celebration or Challenge of Multiethnic Shift in Contemporary Korea?” *Korea Journal* Vol. 47 No. 4: pp. 32–63.

Han, Huamei. 2014. “’Westerners,’ ‘Chinese,’ and/or ‘Us: Exploring the Intersections of Language, Race, Religion, and Immigrantization.” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* Vol. 45 No. 1: pp. 54–70.

Jenks, Christopher Joseph. 2017. *Race and Ethnicity in English Language Teaching: Korea in Focus*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Jho, Daehoon. 2015. “글로벌、다문화 한국의 ‘시민’과 ‘시민교육’ - 새로운 쟁점과 과제.” [Citizen and Citizenship Education in Global, Multicultural Korea - Emerging Issues and Challenges.] *Journal of Educational Research Institute* Vol. 17 No. 1: pp. 1–18.

Jung, Jin-Heon. 2014. “North Korean Migrants in South Korea: From Heroes to Burdens and First Unifiers.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 142–164. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Kang, Mi Ok. 2015. *Multicultural Education in South Korea: Language, Ideology, and Culture in Korean Language Arts Education*. New York: Routledge.

Kang, Soon-won. 2010. “Multicultural Education and the Rights to Education of Migrant Children in South Korea.” *Educational Review* Vol. 62 No. 3: pp. 287–300.

Kim, Eleana. 2014A. “Beyond Motherlands and Mother Love: Locating Korean Adoptees in Global Korea.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 165–183. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Kim, Hui-Jung. 2009. *Immigration Challenges and "Multicultural" Responses: The State, the Dominant Ethnie and Immigrants in South Korea*. Madison: University of Wisconsin.

Kim, Hyein Amber. 2020. “Understanding “Koreanness”: Racial Stratification and Colorism in Korea and Implications for Korean Multicultural Education.” *International Journal of Multicultural Education* Vol. 22 No. 1: pp. 76–97.

Kim, Minjeong. 2018. *Elusive Belonging: Marriage Immigrants and “Multiculturalism” in Rural South Korea*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Kim, Nadia Y. 2014B. “Race-ing toward the Real South Korea: The Cases of Black-Korean Nationals and African Migrants.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 211–243. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Kim, Nora Hui-Jung. 2014C. “Korea: Multiethnic or Multicultural?” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 58–78. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

KOSIS. 2020. “시군구별 외국인주민 현황.” [The Current Situation of Foreign Residents by City and County.] Available at: <https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=110&tblId=TX_11025_A001_A>. [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020.]

Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger. 1991. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, Byoungha. 2010. “Incorporating Foreigners in Korea: The Politics of Differentiated Membership.” *OMNES: The Journal of Multicultural Society* Vol. 1 No. 2: pp.35–64.

Lee, Hye-Kyung. 2003. “Gender, Migration and Civil Activism in South Korea.” *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* Vol. 12 No. 1-2: pp. 127–153.

Lee, Yean-Ju, Dong-Hoon Seol, and Sung-Nam Cho. 2006. “International Marriages in South Korea: The Significance of Nationality and Ethnicity.” *Journal of Population Research* Vol. 23 No. 2: pp. 163–182.

Lie, John. 2014. “Introduction: Multhethnic Korea.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 1–27. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Lim, Timothy C. 2014. “Late Migration, Discourse, and the Politics of Multiculturalism in South Korea.” In *Multiethnic Korea? Multiculturalism, Migration, and Peoplehood Diversity in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by John Lie: pp. 31–57. Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies.

Ma, Rong. 2007. “A New Perspective in Guiding Ethnic Relations in the Twenty- first Century: ‘De-politicization’ of Ethnicity in China.” *Asian Ethnicity* Vol. 8 No. 3: pp. 199–217.

McCargo, Duncan. 2011. “Informal Citizens: Graduated Citizenship in Southern Thailand*.” Ethnic and Racial Studies*: pp. 1–17. iFirst Article, Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2010.537360>.

Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. “건강가정·다문화가족지원센터 운영.” [Operation of Multicultural Family and Healthy Family Support Centres.] Available at: <http://www.mogef.go.kr/sp/fam/sp_fam_f003.do>. [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020.]

Moon, Seungho. 2010. “Multicultural and Global Citizenship in the Transnational Age: The Case of South Korea.” *International Journal of Multicultural Education* Vol. 12 No. 1: pp. 1–15.

Munasinghe, Viranjini. 2018. “Ethnicity in Anthropology.” *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology.* John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea1948>.

OECD Data. 2020. “Hours worked.” Available at: <https://data.oecd.org/emp/hours-worked.htm>. [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020.]

Ock, Hyun-ju. 2019. “[Multicultural Korea] Jeju refugee crisis and beyond: Yemeni asylum seekers build life in Korea.” *The Korea Herald*, Feb 17, 2019. Available at: <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190217000042>.

Oh, Jung-Eun, Dong Kwan Kang, Julia Jiwon Shin, Sang-lim Lee, Seung Bok Lee and Kiseon Chung. 2012. Migration Profile of the Republic of Korea. IOM MRTC Research Report Series No. 2011-01. The Migration Research and Training Centre of the International Organization for Migration.

Okely, Judith. 2020 [2012]. *Anthropological Practice: Fieldwork and the Ethnographic Method*. New York: Routledge.

Park, Seo-Hyun. 2017. "Between Globalization and Nationalism: The Politics of Immigration in South Korea." *Asian Perspective* Vol. 41 No. 3: pp 377–402.

Regional Children's Centre Seoul Support Group. "지역아동센터란." [Regarding Regional Children's Centres.] Available at: <http://sosc.or.kr/?page_id=11.> [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020.]

Ruecker, Todd and Lindsey Ives. 2015. "White Native English Speakers Needed: The Rhetorical Construction of Privilege in Online Teacher Recruitment Spaces." *TESOL Quarterly* Vol. 49 No. 4: pp. 733–756.

Seth, Michael J. 2002. *Education Fever: Society, Politics, and the Pursuit of Schooling in South Korea.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Shin, Gi-Wook. 2006. *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics, and Legacy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Statistics Korea. 2020A. "결혼이민자 현황." [The Current Situation of Marriage Immigrants.] Available at: <http://www.index.go.kr/potal/main/EachDtlPageDetail.do?idx_cd=2819>. [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020.]

Statistics Korea. 2020B. “2020 청소년 통계.” [Youth Statistics 2020.] PDF available at: <http://m.kostat.go.kr/board/file_dn.jsp?aSeq=381815&ord=2>.

Statistics Korea. 2020C. “우리나라 초·중·고 학생의 사교육 현황.” [The Current Situation of Private Education of Elementary, Middle and High School Students in South Korea.] Available at: <http://www.index.go.kr/potal/main/EachDtlPageDetail.do?idx_cd=2697>. [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020.]

The Guardian. 2011. “David Cameron tells Muslim Britain: stop tolerating extremists.” Feb 5, 2011. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2011/feb/05/david-cameron-muslim-extremism>.

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). 2006. UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: Addendum to the Fourteenth Periodic Reports of State Parties Due in 2006, Republic of Korea, CERD/C/KOR/14. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/45c30ba10.html.> [Last accessed Nov 10, 2020].

Valluvan , Sivamohan. 2017. “Conviviality and Multiculture: A Post- integration Sociology of Multi-ethnic Interaction.” *YounG* Vol. 24 No. 3: pp. 204–221.

Verkuyten, Maykel. 2018. “Ethnicity.” In *The Social Psychology of Ethnic Identity, 2nd edition*. London: Routledge.

Walton, Jessica. “Affective Citizenship and Peripheral Intimacies: Children’s Inter-ethnic Relations in South Korean Schools.” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* Vol. 51 No. 2: pp. 195–211.

Warming, Hanne. 2011. “Getting under their skins? Accessing young children’s perspectives through ethnographic fieldwork.” *Childhood* Vol. 18 No. 1: pp. 39–53.

Watson, Iain. 2012. “Paradoxical Multiculturalism in South Korea.” *Asian Politics & Policy*, Vol. 4 No. 2: pp. 233–258.

Yuh, Ji-Yeon. 2005. “Moved by War: Migration, Diaspora, and the Korean War.” *Journal of Asian American Studies* Vol. 8 No. 3: pp. 277–291.